

**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY  
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE  
SAN JOSÉ, CA 95192**

**S17-5, University Policy, Required Enrollment for  
Culminating Graduate Students**

**Legislative History:**

At its meeting of March 13, 2017, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Kaufman for the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee. This policy rescinds University Policy F11-2.

**Rescinds: F11-2**

**Signed and approved by  
President Mary A. Papazian  
on April 13, 2017.**

**University Policy  
Required Enrollment for Culminating Graduate Students**

- Whereas Graduate students usually receive a Report-in-Progress (RP) grade on thesis, project, or comprehensive exam courses while they are in the process of completing their research, scholarly or creative activity, report, and/or comprehensive exams; and
- Whereas Graduate culminating experiences can involve considerable university resources, including faculty and staff time and library resources; and
- Whereas Payment of fees for these services sets a standard to the student, faculty, and university that the professional nature of the relationship must be respected and that all parties involved must provide their needed and timely input in the process; and
- Whereas At SJSU, there is a two-tiered payment structure (0-6 units or greater than 6 units) in regular session courses. Fees solely for 1 unit can be charged only through special sessions; and
- Whereas Most universities require enrollment (with fees) of graduate students as they work on their culminating experiences, including at least nine other CSU campuses; and

- Whereas This policy recommendation has the unanimous support of the University Graduate Studies & Research Committee;
- Whereas The current system of ensuring continuous enrollment for SJSU graduate students who have completed all of their requirements for a master's degree except for the culminating experience is to allow them to take a 1-unit UNVS or Departmental 1290R course, which limits the fees collected from students to a small amount; therefore be it
- Resolved That F11-2 be rescinded and replaced with the following policy.

Approved: March 6, 2017

Vote: 13-0-0

Present: Bruck (non-voting), Campsey, Kaufman, Khan, Nash, Ng (non-voting), Saran, Sen, Simpson, Spica, Torres, Trousdale, Walters, Wilson, Yao

Financial Impact: Addition of funds to the university through added fee collection, financial cost to students

Workload Impact: Additional workload to Graduate Admissions & Program Evaluations to review registration of students in RP status prior to processing "Verification of Culminating Experience;" additional registrar workload to transfer students to special session status; additional Graduate Studies workload to administer the program, review appeals, handle retroactive adds, and alleviate problems with the system.

## Required Enrollment for Culminating Graduate Students

1. All master's candidates on a thesis (Plan A) or creative project (Plan C) track must receive credit for at least one unit of a Departmental 299 course as a degree requirement to receive a master's degree. The total number of units for which master's degree credit may be received is governed by the limitation that not more than six semester units shall be allowed for a thesis or project, as stipulated in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Article 7, Section 40510. This limitation extends to all project or thesis-preparation (but not thesis writing) courses (often 298s although other course numbers are also used) but not to research classes. There is no limitation on the number of 298, 299, or other project or thesis course units that can be taken so long as credit (CR grade) is not received in project or thesis courses until all degree requirements are met and the units in excess of six do not appear on the degree candidacy form. The 299 and 599 numbers may be used for no purpose other than a thesis or dissertation, respectively. Despite the parlance used in some departments in calling non-299 reports "theses," a thesis is defined as a document written and submitted according to the SJSU Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation Guidelines and formally reviewed by Graduate Studies within the Office of Graduate & Undergraduate Programs (GUP). Unless a thesis or dissertation is approved by Graduate Studies, thesis (299) and dissertation (599) units may not be awarded credit (CR grade). Credit in Plan B project (usually 298s) and comprehensive exam-preparation courses must also be delayed until the completion of the project or passage of the exam, respectively. Students switching from Plan A thesis to Plan B project or comprehensive exam must retroactively drop any 299 thesis units on their record or have the grades changed to NC. Project units must then be taken or added, but the latter only if all requirements of the project class, including submission of a final project report, have been fulfilled while pursuing the thesis. No more than 12 units of dissertation writing credit (599) can be applied to the doctoral degree.
2. Effective Fall 2012, once a culminating experience supervisory course (thesis, dissertation, project, or comprehensive exam-preparation course required in the degree program) has been taken with any non-letter grade (RP, I, CR), graduate students will be required to enroll in regular session (state-supported) classes to finish the requirements of their degree program or a special session (self-supported) class, UNVS or Departmental 1290R every fall and spring semester until the culminating experience is completed. Thus continuous enrollment is required of graduate students once they have begun their culminating experience work and have completed all other course requirements for their degrees. For programs that split the culminating experience coursework into two or more semesters, the requirement of continuous enrollment applies to that period following the second of those semesters unless other degree-required coursework is still to be taken. Instructors must not give grades of CR until the students have completed the course requirements; however, if they mistakenly are given CR grades, this policy still

requires the students to maintain continuous enrollment, thus allowing the students to take 1290R. The instructor of the class will be asked to change the grade to an RP.

If any work for a class is handed in after the last day of the semester, the student must enroll the following semester even if the work simply completes an incomplete or RP. Students receiving C- or lower letter grades or NC grades in their culminating courses must repeat those courses and are therefore not eligible for the 1290R course. Summers are excluded from this continuous enrollment requirement. As previously, departments can require retaking 298, 299, 599, or other project or exam-preparation courses if it is deemed that the student needs repetition of the instruction given in those courses. The exception to this requirement for course enrollment each semester until graduation is for students with an official leave of absence from the university. However, as per University Policy S15-3, VIII, 2, graduate students at this point in their program will not be eligible for a leave of absence other than a medical or military leave, except under rare circumstances. Continuous enrollment will be substantiated by GAPE prior to processing of the "Verification of Culminating Experience" memo indicating degree completion.

3. The 1290R-courses are to be made available as an accommodation to graduate students to maintain continuous enrollment in fall and spring semesters at a reduced cost in comparison with regular session enrollment. Students may elect to retake the regular session thesis, dissertation, project, or exam-preparation course in which the original RP or I grade was obtained instead of taking the special session 1290R course; therefore, the 1290R course is not an absolute degree requirement.
4. The Provost, in consultation with the the Academic Planning & Budget unit, will set the special session fees for the UNVS and Departmental 1290R courses. The UNVS 1290R course has been created by GUP and is available in the semester immediately following approval of this policy. If a program does not already have a 1290R course, the program must propose it. For those departments/schools that fail to create the classes, their students will take the UNVS 1290R course. For the UNVS 1290R course, the Provost will determine the distribution of the fees collected but will not include distribution to the colleges and departments/schools with which the students are affiliated. Retroactive course add fees will apply for students who enroll in the 1290R course after the end of the semester.
5. Students who register in courses in which RP is a grading option will be notified, by the Registrar in collaboration with GUP, of this policy and the fee ramifications if an RP grade is earned. All reading committees and project, thesis, dissertation, and comprehensive exam-preparation advisors in classes in which RP is a grading option will be notified by GUP of the fee ramifications and timeline applicable if an RP grade is awarded. Students who earn an RP grade will be notified by the Registrar on how to enroll in the special sessions course.
6. The university requires continuous enrollment of graduate students once all degree requirements are satisfied other than the culminating experience; thus "stopping out"

for even a single semester is not permitted at this point in the graduate career. This latter requirement applies to all graduate students, even if the culminating experience is a set of comprehensive exams for which there is no departmental preparation class. Therefore, all graduate students, no matter the culminating experience and courses associated with it, must be enrolled each semester once all degree requirements other than the culminating experience are fulfilled. Those who fail to register for the designated course will be notified by GAPE that they must retroactively add the course in each semester missed. If such students have not at that point finished their culminating experience, they must enroll each semester thereafter until it is completed. If they have completed all degree requirements, they can graduate. In either of these cases, the students need not apply for re-admission.

7. Appeals of the 1290R course fee on the basis that the delay in completing the culminating experience was substantially beyond the student's control can be made to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Results of the appeal will be communicated to the student within four weeks of the student filing the appeal.