

# STEPS TOWARD EARNING THE MASTER'S DEGREE

The information presented in this handout is intended to provide a general overview of the processes involved in obtaining a master's degree. If you have questions or require further clarification about any step, you are encouraged to contact the Graduate School or your Graduate Coordinator, as applicable. Valuable information on policies, procedures and relevant deadlines is also available from the publications indicated below and the Graduate School website at: [www.csuchico.edu/gjis/gs/graduate.html](http://www.csuchico.edu/gjis/gs/graduate.html).

## ADMISSION

1. Apply to CSU, Chico through CSUMentor at [www.CSUMentor.edu](http://www.CSUMentor.edu) by the application deadline for your master's degree program objective.
2. Submit official transcripts of your academic records and any required graduate admission test scores to the Graduate School by the application deadline. Three official transcripts are required from all post-secondary schools attended whether or not any work was completed. Transcripts will be considered official only if they are received directly from the schools attended, or within two years of issue in an envelope sealed by the institution of origin.
3. Submit all required supplementary application materials directly to the Graduate Coordinator for the program to which you are applying. These may include any of the following: letters of recommendation, statement of purpose, portfolio, or writing sample.
4. Once admitted, you will be sent information about advising for your program and registration in the University.

## ENROLLMENT AND PROGRESS IN THE PROGRAM

1. Review the *University Catalog* for departmental information specific to your program and general requirements for all graduate students.
2. Review the publication, *A Guide to Graduate Studies: Policies, Procedures, & Format* which can be accessed online from the Graduate School website.
3. If you are admitted to conditionally classified status in the master's degree program, consult your Graduate Coordinator to discuss any deficiencies in your preparation for graduate study. You may enroll to complete any prerequisite courses, fulfill the departmental requirements for classified standing, and begin your program course work. However, most programs have set a limit on the amount of degree course work that may be completed before attaining classified standing. Check your departmental section of the *University Catalog* to see if there is a limit that applies for your program.
4. Consult your Graduate Coordinator to develop a plan of study that fulfills the program requirements, your academic objectives and the university degree requirements. Work with the coordinator to focus your plan of study, plan your culminating activity, and identify faculty with expertise in your specific area(s) of interest. (Though this is the advising model in most programs, some may follow a different pattern. Your Graduate Coordinator can inform you of the advising process in your program.)
5. Meet with faculty in your area(s) of interest, discuss your culminating activity, and establish your Graduate Advisory Committee.
6. Complete and submit an approved Master's Degree Program Plan to the Graduate School when you have completed 9-12 units of the program course work.
7. Notify your Graduate Coordinator when you have met all departmental requirements for advancement to classified and candidate status as outlined in the *University Catalog*. In addition to any specified departmental requirements, students generally are admitted to classified standing when they are formally accepted by the department for graduate study without any deficiency in preparation. Advancement to candidacy typically takes place after students have completed at least nine units of their proposed program and demonstrated ability and aptitude in the discipline.
8. Complete all course work required for the degree.

