

Graduate Program in Civil & Environmental Engineering (CEEN) FAQ

Q: How long does it take to earn a MS degree?

A: Most students finish their MS within 3 to 5 quarters.

Q: Am I eligible to apply to the program if I have a BS degree in something other than civil engineering?

A: Yes, you can apply for conditional admittance, and if you have 3 quarters or less of course work to make up can take that course work at Cal Poly.

Q: What are the criteria used to admit students to the graduate program?

A: An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better (in the last 90 units), GRE math score around 156 (old score 700), and strong letters of recommendation. The admitted pool has had a mean GPA around 3.4.

Q: How many classes do I need to take for a MS?

A: An MS requires 45 units of 400 and 500 level course work. All grad students are required to take two 1 unit graduate seminars (591 and 592). For a thesis masters, 9 of those units will be thesis units (599). More than half of the 45 units must be from 500 level courses.

Q: Can I do a curriculum only MS (non-thesis option)?

A: Yes, this requires 45 units of 400 and 500 level course work. To complete the curriculum MS a student must pass a comprehensive MS examination in lieu of a thesis.

Q: How do I apply?

A: There are two parts:

1) An online application through CSU mentor (<http://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/graduate/>) followed by submission of official transcripts and GRE scores to Admissions.

2) Submission via interfolio (http://grad.calpoly.edu/programs/masters_programs.html) of unofficial transcripts, GRE scores, statement of purpose, and contact information for 3 people who will be submitting letters of recommendation on your behalf.

The statement of purpose is where students declare which topic they want to focus on (Environmental, Geotechnical, Structures, Transportation, Water) and can highlight information about themselves that is not quantified in their GPA and GRE scores. Be sure and specify the discipline your are interested in pursuing in the statement of purpose (e.g., Water, Structural, Environmental, Transportation, Geotechnical). You do not need to wait for your letters to be uploaded before submitting your Interfolio application.

Q: What is the application deadline?

A: See the admissions web site for application deadlines

(<http://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/graduate/deadlines.html>)

Q: Who should the letters of recommendation come from?

A: Anyone who can speak towards you aptitude for succeeding in the graduate program; Professors who you have had contact with, employers who you have worked for...

Q: What is the Blended program?

A: This is a graduate program for Cal Poly students who want to pursue a thesis masters. Successful

applicants are admitted to the program once they have completed 180 units towards their degree (essentially one quarter prior to graduation). The Blended student will complete course work towards their BS and MS degrees concurrently. Both degrees will be conferred upon completion of the program.

Q: What is the application deadline for the Blended program?

A: The deadline is the end of the second week in the quarter prior to the quarter that you are applying for (e.g. if you want to apply to the Blended program starting Winter quarter then the deadline is the end of the second week of Fall quarter). Note you must be in the program before graduating, so if you are graduating in the Spring and want to be in the program then you must apply for Spring quarter with that deadline being the end of the second week of Winter quarter.

Q: How do I apply to the Blended program?

A: This application requires students to develop a research plan with a faculty advisor prior to applying. Once a research plan is developed the application process is: Submission via Interfolio (<http://apply.interfolio.com/28533>) of unofficial transcripts, contact information for 3 people who will be submitting letters of recommendation on your behalf, and a statement of purpose that lists the faculty advisor and the research plan you have developed with that faculty advisor. You do not need to wait for your letters to be uploaded before submitting your Interfolio application.

Q: What happens if I start the Blended program and decide to bail?

A: Then you can exit with your BS degree.

Q: Are there funding opportunities for graduate students?

A: Some faculty have funded research that will pay graduates students to work on research. There are opportunities for graduates students to teach labs within the department and be paid as a lecturer. The financial aid office has grant and loan opportunities available for graduate students. There is also university wide money on a competitive basis through Grad Ed (<http://grad.calpoly.edu/resources/index.html>).

Q: How do I find a thesis topic?

A: Most thesis topics are proposed by the faculty. Many faculty have active research programs with new and ongoing projects that provide thesis topics for graduate students. Faculty may also be open to novel topics proposed by students. The point here is to approach faculty in the area that your are interested in and discuss possible thesis topics.

Q: What is the Dual MBA and MS in Engineering degree, and how do I apply?

A: This program is for engineering students who want to pursue an MBA at the same they are pursuing an MS in Civil & Environmental Engineering. To apply you note your interest in your online application and then notify the grad coordinator of the MBA program of your intent. Admission is then handled internally by the Business and Civil graduate programs.

Q: What is the Dual MCRP and MSE in Transportation degree, and how do I apply?

A: This program is for MCRP students who want to pursue a MS in Transportation Engineering at the same time. To enter the Dual program you must first gain admission to the MCRP program and then express your interest in the dual MSE degree to the graduate coordinator. Admission is then handled internally by the Planning and Civil graduate programs.

Q: What if I have further questions?

A: Email me bqu@calpoly.edu.