

# Graduate Student Handbook



**CAL POLY HUMBOLDT**

Cal Poly Humboldt  
Office of Graduate Studies  
2024-2025

## Welcome to Cal Poly Humboldt State University

We are so honored to have you as part of our academic community and for you to start your journey as a graduate student scholar. Know you are valued and important to the mission of the California State University system and life at Cal Poly Humboldt State University. Together you create a cohort or community of learners. Soon you will find yourself in individual programs, research groups, and labs but PLEASE KNOW that Graduate Studies is hoping you will also sustain the connection with your peers as first-year graduate students and form meaningful connections with other graduate students across campus.

You will meet with your faculty advisor to put together your graduate curriculum and culminating project or exam. The Graduate Studies Office is here to help you navigate this process as well as forms, requirements, and build community. In addition to your graduate advisor, the Graduate Coordinator in your area of study, Terri Fisher, Cameron Allison-Govier, myself, and our student staff will be your best resources. I have the utmost confidence in them to support you and your success. Success to us means that you will navigate your program to successful completion of a graduate degree, apply this educational experience to a fulfilling career, make and achieve additional educational goals, and become part of the California community and lifeforce.

Sincerely,  
**Dr. Carmen Bustos-Works**  
*Associate Vice President of Academic Programs*





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## Getting to Cal Poly Humboldt

### Auto

Arcata is located off U.S. Highway 101. It takes about six hours to drive to Arcata from San Francisco or Sacramento. Watch for the Cal Poly Humboldt off-ramp and signs to the campus.

[Get driving directions.](#)



Parking and Meter regulations are in effect every week throughout the year regardless of breaks in instruction. This will include permit and meter requirements between sessions, Fall and Spring breaks, and Winter Recess. Parking permits are required Monday - Thursday 7 am to 10 pm and Friday 7 am - 5 pm. All vehicles parked on campus property must display a valid University parking permit. Permits are not valid at parking meters. Parking meter fees may be paid in lieu of a permit. Visit [parking.humboldt.edu](http://parking.humboldt.edu) for more information.

## **Cal Poly Humboldt Commuter Programs**

### **Carpool Program**

Each day you have 3 or more people in your car (2 if that is the car's maximum capacity), stop by the drive-up window at the Parking & Commuter Services office on Rossow St between the hours of 7 am and 11 am, show your Cal Poly Humboldt General or Staff parking permit and receive a Carpool Preferential Parking Permit for the day. Visit [parking.humboldt.edu/carpooling](http://parking.humboldt.edu/carpooling) for more information.

### **JackPass**

The University's Jack Pass program encourages mass transit and reduced fuel consumption by enabling students, faculty, and staff to travel on Humboldt County bus systems. Save car and parking expenses, and help protect the environment at the same time! During the Fall and Spring semesters, all Cal Poly Humboldt students will have unlimited free ride access to the Redwood Transit System (RTS) buses, which serve the Route 101 corridor from Trinidad to Scotia, including Valley East and Valley West in Arcata, the Eureka Transit System (ETS) buses which serve the city of Eureka and Arcata & Mad River Transit System (A&MRTS) which serves the Arcata area, and Willow Creek/Arcata Route which is operated by Humboldt Transit Authority and travels between the communities of Arcata and Willow Creek. For more information and bus schedules, visit [parking.humboldt.edu/bus-riding](http://parking.humboldt.edu/bus-riding).

### **Bike to Campus**

Bicycles are one of the most useful and economical alternatives to motor vehicles because they are relatively inexpensive to buy and need only minor repairs. For students living in Arcata, the campus is only a short ride away. The University provides bike racks throughout the campus. For help maintaining and repairing your bicycle, contact the [Bicycle Learning Center](#), located beneath the steps leading into the West Gymnasium. They provide tools and assistance for students' bicycle maintenance needs, on-site, for free!

## **Student Communication & ID Card**

### **Cal Poly Humboldt Email (Gmail) Access**

After submitting your Intent to Enroll, you will receive an email from Information Technology Services confirming your email has been created. Once you have access, it is important to



regularly monitor the inbox for important campus messages. You can access your campus email from the Cal Poly Humboldt homepage or by logging on directly from Gmail. Visit the [Information Technology Services](#) webpage for information on activating your Cal Poly Humboldt email account.

## **MyHumboldt**

MyHumboldt is an online one-stop, self-service portal that provides integrated services to our students, faculty, and staff. It provides authentication for our students to check their to-do list, update personal data, register and drop classes, view financial aid status, pay fees, and view grades. MyHumboldt is accessible virtually 24 hours a day, with limited interruptions.

Once you get the email from the Information Technology Services confirming your student email, you should be able to log in and begin using MyHumboldt. Your username is everything before the @ in your student email, and your password is whatever you choose when you reset your password to first access your email. Once your username and password are set up, you will be able to access a variety of Cal Poly Humboldt resources with this login info such as MyHumboldt, Gmail, Canvas, and more.

### **Canvas**

Most courses are managed through Canvas. When you officially register for a course, you are automatically enrolled into the course on Canvas. Instructors may not publish the course content until the first week of courses. Canvas acts as the conduit between students and their instructors. Your instructors use Canvas to post their syllabus, class assignments, and a number of other materials for the class. Assignments will often be turned in through Canvas as well. You can access Canvas from the MyHumboldt homepage or by simply typing [canvas.humboldt.edu](https://canvas.humboldt.edu) into your browser's address field. Logging in to Canvas uses the same credentials as you do for MyHumboldt. You can also access Canvas via your mobile device by downloading the Canvas App. Visit [Academic Technology Guides](#) for more information on how to navigate Canvas and answers to frequently asked questions.

## **Campus ID**

As an active student, you should have a Cal Poly Humboldt ID. There are several services in which you will use your Cal Poly Humboldt ID. Your first ID is included in your student fees. This service is managed through the Cal Poly Humboldt Library. For more information on how to get a campus ID card, visit the [Cal Poly Humboldt Library website](#).

# **Student Resources & Support**

## **Academic & Career Advising Center**

Cal Poly Humboldt's Academic and Career Advising Center (ACAC) strives to provide individualized and culturally responsible services and resources to all Cal Poly Humboldt students and alumni. All students can come in for questions about GE requirements, DARS review, and other topics related to academics. All students have a career advisor based on their major that can help with career exploration, developing your résumé, and applying to jobs, internships, and graduate school. Once we are back on campus, we also have computers

available for student use, informative handouts, a career library, and the Career Clothing Closet with free professional clothes! For more information visit [acac.humboldt.edu/](http://acac.humboldt.edu/)

**Handshake** Cal Poly Humboldt Handshake is exclusively for Cal Poly Humboldt students. It is a 24/7 job and internship database that includes on-campus and off-campus, work-study, part-time, full-time, temporary, summer, internship, and career positions. Sign up for workshops, on-campus interviews, and special events.

## Academic Calendar

The Academic Calendar is a list of dates and deadlines throughout the Academic Year. Visit the [Office of the Registrar's website](#) to view the academic calendar for the current academic year and a list of upcoming deadlines.

## Children's Center

The Cal Poly Humboldt Children's Center provides affordable high quality child care and early education programs in support of Cal Poly Humboldt students, staff & faculty's families. Fall semester registration is scheduled for the last two weeks in July. Spring semester registration takes place during the first week of January. Summer registration begins May 1st. Hours are 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. during the academic year. The Children's Center is open most of the year. Visit [childrencenter.humboldt.edu](http://childrencenter.humboldt.edu) for more information.

## Dreamer Student Resources

The California State University will be providing free immigration legal services for CSU students and employees. Cal Poly Humboldt also provides additional services, events, and resources for dreamer students. Visit [dreamers.humboldt.edu](http://dreamers.humboldt.edu) for more information.

**Scholars Without Borders** Scholars Without Borders provides a critical thinking space on campus for all students, but particularly undocumented, DACAmented, AB540, and students from mixed-status families. We aim to provide a safe space for students who are affected by the current political climate and provide resources for students to further succeed in their education. Visit [scholarswithoutborders.humboldt.edu](http://scholarswithoutborders.humboldt.edu) for more information.

## Faculty Office Hours

Faculty members maintain regular office hours, meeting with the instructor of a particular course can help you to answer questions, solve problems, prepare for tests, or find additional resources if needed. Information about faculty office hours can be obtained from the course syllabus, the department office, the instructor, or your department's website.

## Graduate Coordinator/Director

Each graduate program has a graduate coordinator or director who is your first point of contact for graduate studies-related inquiries. This person helps you plan and organize your progress as a graduate student from admissions to graduation. Contact your graduate coordinator about items such as forming your thesis or project committee, how to request leaves of absence or withdrawals, etc.



## Graduate Council

The purpose of the council is to discuss and approve such things as graduate program policy, program review, and the strategic plan for graduate education. The graduate council consists of the Vice Provost, Academic Programs (Chair), a faculty member (graduate coordinator) from each master's program, and one student representative from each college. For more information and the meeting schedule, visit the [Graduate Studies website](#).

## International Student Services

As an international student at Cal Poly Humboldt, you have many services and opportunities available to you. There are some special regulations that apply only to international students. Please be sure you understand these regulations, and if you have any questions contact [international@humboldt.edu](mailto:international@humboldt.edu). For information regarding costs, funding, deadlines, and any other information for international students, visit [extended.humboldt.edu/international-programs](http://extended.humboldt.edu/international-programs)

## Indian Tribal & Educational Personnel Program

The Indian Tribal & Educational Personnel Program's purpose is to facilitate and promote academic success and self-efficacy for primarily Native American Indian students at Cal Poly Humboldt which validates tribal cultural values, and political status and promotes the federal Indian policy of Indian Self-Determination. For more information visit [itepp.humboldt.edu](http://itepp.humboldt.edu)

## Learning Center

The Learning Center is committed to fostering academic growth for Cal Poly Humboldt's diverse student body by providing positive, collaborative, and inclusive learning environments informed by current research. Our mission is to improve student academic performance and help students progress to degrees through skill development, tutoring, and structured collaborative learning. We strive to provide equitable access by delivering our services in a variety of ways, including individualized and small group learning as well as direct peer and professional staff support. The Learning Center offers tutoring, writing support, peer coaching, supplemental instruction, and a plethora of student resources. Visit [learning.humboldt.edu](http://learning.humboldt.edu) for more information.

## Writing Center

The Writing Studio, part of the learning center, provides free writing support for Cal Poly Humboldt students at any stage of the writing process. Writers at all levels and in all majors can benefit from visiting the Writing Studio. Trained consultants will work with you on many kinds of writing projects and tasks, including brainstorming, crafting a thesis statement, tackling your



senior thesis, revising a lab report, and improving your grammar and punctuation. Visit the [Writing Center website](#) for more information or to schedule an appointment.

## **Library**

The University Library is an essential partner in teaching, learning, research, and community engagement at Cal Poly Humboldt. The Library collaborates with Cal Poly Humboldt's diverse campus community to ensure user-centered learning experiences, welcoming environments, and accessible information resources in order to facilitate scholarly inquiry and prepare students to be critical thinkers who are engaged members of their local, regional, and global communities. The [Library's website](#) is a helpful tool whether you need assistance with research, or are looking for a particular book, but it also makes accessible the other services offered in the Library building. Online library services include one of the largest collections of electronic databases and electronic journals among the CSU libraries. Visit [library.humboldt.edu](http://library.humboldt.edu) for more information.

## **Office of Graduate Studies**

The Office of Graduate Studies is here to help graduate students succeed through a Master's degree program here at Cal Poly Humboldt. We're always here to provide any assistance you may need to achieve the best educational experience. We collaborate with other campus departments to coordinate opportunities that make graduate school accessible for all students. If you have any questions or concerns feel free to call us at 707-826-5194 or email [hsugrad@humboldt.edu](mailto:hsugrad@humboldt.edu).

## **Student Disability Resource Center**

The mission of the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) is to promote self-advocacy and to provide service, support, and resources for students with disabilities to maximize educational opportunities while at Cal Poly Humboldt and beyond. We strive to create an inclusive and accessible environment at Cal Poly Humboldt by educating the campus community on disability-related issues. Visit [disability.humboldt.edu](http://disability.humboldt.edu) for more information.

## **Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is Cal Poly Humboldt's leading force in building bridges of caring, engaging critical social consciousness, and elevating all community members' sense of belonging, success, and well-being. All of this is in service to dismantling oppressive structures in policy and practice (and developing equitable policy and practice).

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion leads the visioning and implementation of Cal Poly



Humboldt's quest for inclusive excellence in alignment with the institution's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan, Future Forward. Through compassionate listening and intentional cross-campus and community collaboration, we strive to transform relationships and policies to shape the Cal Poly Humboldt of the future. To learn more about the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and to view the extensive list of resources and services this office offers, visit [diversity.humboldt.edu](https://diversity.humboldt.edu)

## Oh Snap!

Oh SNAP! Student Food Programs is a student-driven initiative. Their mission is to increase access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food for all Cal Poly Humboldt students by engaging in campus and community partnerships, and by raising awareness of food insecurity among our peers.

Oh SNAP! provides students with basic necessities and connections to community resources. Services currently include a campus food pantry, a weekly stand with free fresh fruits and vegetables (during the growing season), CalFresh application assistance, connections to other local food resources, and outreach events. They also provide CalFresh assistance to anyone who needs it, and pantry and food redistribution services are for matriculated Cal Poly Humboldt students only. If you have questions about this please contact [ohsnap@humboldt.edu](mailto:ohsnap@humboldt.edu). Visit their website [hsuohsnap.org](https://hsuohsnap.org) for more information.

## Student Health and Wellbeing Services

Student Health and Wellbeing Services (SHWS), a fully accredited clinic, consists of Medical Services, Counseling and Psychological Services, and Health Education. Our licensed medical professionals include physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, medical assistants, clinical laboratory scientists, and a radiologic technologist. Our professional mental health providers include licensed psychologists, social workers, and marriage and family therapists, as well as therapists fulfilling professional training at our site. Our front office staff is welcoming, knowledgeable, and always happy to assist you with health records, appointment scheduling, and any other questions. In our Recreation & Wellness facility, our Health Education team and the Peer Health Educators focus on health-promoting fun activities for students.

SHC is mainly funded by the required Health Services fee, paid as part of the tuition, and billed directly to student accounts. SHC services are provided to regularly enrolled students. Though most of our services at SHC are free, there are some medical services and supplies that may require a small fee. A few examples of these are immunizations, TB skin tests, prescription and over-the-counter medicines, x-rays, laboratory work, and splints/braces. For more information, visit [wellbeing.humboldt.edu](https://wellbeing.humboldt.edu).



## University Police Department

Working 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, University Police Department (UPD) officers enforce all California Penal and Vehicle Codes on and around campus. UPD officers also assist the sheriff's department calls with any campus-affiliated calls within the city of Arcata. We maintain a safe academic environment by being a proactive police force working closely with students, staff, faculty, and community members alike. The UPD also offers a variety of services such as online crime reporting, livescan and fingerprinting, safety escorts, and more. For more information on the UPD as well as information on all the services provided, visit [police.humboldt.edu](http://police.humboldt.edu).

## Veteran Enrollment and Transition Services

Cal Poly Humboldt Veteran Enrollment and Transition Services (VETS) provides a primary point of contact on campus, programming, and is working towards additional space to support and build community. VETS is staffed with veterans and family members who share experiences and career goals. Currently, we serve approximately 500 military-affiliated students. We strive to provide a safe and supportive learning environment. Visit [veterans.humboldt.edu](http://veterans.humboldt.edu) for more information.

## Graduate Student Life

### California State University Grad Slam

The CSU Grad Slam is an exciting opportunity for graduate students across the CSU system to share their research and compete for monetary prizes. Student competitors have 3 minutes and one slide to present their thesis, project, or other creative work to a non-specialist audience. Last academic year, CSU Bakersfield hosted the second annual CSU Grad Slam. Each year, the CSU Grad Slam will be hosted by different campuses across the state. More information regarding the competition for this academic year will be available on the Graduate Studies website when available.

### California State University Student Research Competition

Each spring semester, the CSU Student Research Competition provides an opportunity for both undergraduate and graduate students to present their outstanding research projects and creative works in a refereed or formal academic competition. Students who are currently enrolled, as well as those who graduated in the previous spring, summer, or fall semesters, are eligible. The system-wide competition is held at a different CSU campus in May of each year, and the application deadlines are in mid-February. Cal Poly Humboldt Dean of Graduate Studies selects up to 10 campus winners to compete in the system-wide competition. For more information, please contact the Office of Research, Economic, and Community Development at [hsuf@humboldt.edu](mailto:hsuf@humboldt.edu).





## Graduate Studies Orientation

We highly encourage you to attend our annual Fall Graduate Student Orientation. Emails will be sent in advance with details about the agenda. Orientation is designed to give our newly admitted students information and resources that will help you succeed in your time here at Cal Poly Humboldt and beyond. If you are unable to attend Orientation we try our best to film the presentation portion and post it on our [website](#).

## Idea Fest

Anyone from the Cal Poly Humboldt community can also submit their academic essays or research articles for the next issue of IdeaFest Journal, Cal Poly Humboldt's own peer-reviewed academic journal. The deadline to submit your publication proposals is posted on the [ideafest website](#). For more information about IdeaFest Journal contact Kyle Morgan at [kyle.morgan@humboldt.edu](mailto:kyle.morgan@humboldt.edu).

# Campus Life

## Arts

The Center Arts box office offers information and ticket sales for many events on campus such as musical concerts, theatrical performances, dance, and special events. These events are available for the general public but Cal Poly Humboldt students are offered discounted or free ticket prices. Visit [centerarts.humboldt.edu](http://centerarts.humboldt.edu) for more information on upcoming events.

## Associated Students

Associated Students is a non-profit, student-run auxiliary of Cal Poly Humboldt. AS serves, engages, and empowers students, and is the official voice to express student opinions, foster awareness of student issues, and protect the rights and interests of students. AS also delivers programs which promote a campus climate that meets the educational, social, and cultural well-being of all students. As a primary entity of campus life, AS affords students a variety of ways to serve their communities, engage in the diverse life of the University, and empower themselves as student leaders who leave their legacies at Cal Poly Humboldt. For more information on this organization or to get involved with AS, visit [associatedstudents.humboldt.edu](http://associatedstudents.humboldt.edu).

## Athletics

Cal Poly Humboldt Athletics is a member of the California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) and NCAA Division II Conference. Tickets to games can be purchased online or at the gate, students are admitted for free. Be sure to take a look at the Jacks' teams achievements on their website: [humboldtathletics.com](http://humboldtathletics.com).

## Campus Recreation

Campus Recreation is vital to the culture of the evolving Cal Poly Humboldt community and is dedicated to promoting holistic wellness and enriching the Cal Poly Humboldt experience by

providing inclusive recreational services, facilities, and opportunities. Campus Recreation offers students an array of intramural activities, sports clubs, and outdoor adventures, as well as a schedule for group fitness classes.

**Student Recreation Center** Located on the university campus, the Student Recreation Center's (SRC) purpose is to enrich the opportunity for on-campus physical activity through drop-in recreation, group fitness classes, indoor climbing, personal training, and special events. Facilities offer strength and cardio training, indoor climbing, personal training, group fitness classes, and an indoor field house. Fees for access for the Fall and Spring semesters are included with tuition.

## Dining Services

Dining Services at Cal Poly Humboldt offers a wide variety of different dining options and a variety of fresh food for different preferences and dietary needs. Cal Poly Humboldt offers different types of dining plans as well, both for resident and non-resident students. To learn more, visit [dining.humboldt.edu](http://dining.humboldt.edu).

## Office of Student Life

Searching for a way to get involved? Through The Office of Student Life, students are able to join or charter a registered student organization, engage in campus-wide programming, and commit to serving the local community. Part of their mission is to also support students in leadership positions at Cal Poly Humboldt. They facilitate a plethora of opportunities for skill-building and leadership exploration. For more information, visit [osl.humboldt.edu](http://osl.humboldt.edu).

# Financial Opportunities

To be eligible for financial aid, a student must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident of the U.S. and a state resident if applying for California state aid. Graduate students are eligible to receive aid only until they earn 50-semester units. Some types of financial aid have specific restrictions; please consult the Financial Aid Office for questions regarding your Financial Aid Award Offer. For more information visit [finaid.humboldt.edu](http://finaid.humboldt.edu).

To apply for aid, a student should complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form online at [fafsa.ed.gov](http://fafsa.ed.gov) or [studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov). The application opens on October 1st and the deadline to apply every year is March 2nd.

## Graduate Federal Work Study

Graduate students are eligible for the Federal Work-Study Program. A Work Study award is an offer to seek a part-time job through the Work Study program. You will receive Work Study funds only if you are eligible for them and you locate a job and begin working. For more information on the work-study program, visit the [Academic & Career Advising Center](#).

## Graduate Assistantship or Teaching Associate Positions

Many departments offer funded graduate assistant, research assistant, or graduate teaching associate positions. Students should check with their department or college office for information about available positions. No FAFSA is required to apply for these positions.

## Cal Poly Humboldt Scholarships & Grants

Cal Poly Humboldt has many scholarships that could assist you in paying for your education. Amounts vary from \$500 to \$4000 annually, and some are renewable. Cal Poly Humboldt awards approximately \$600,000 in scholarships annually. For more information on scholarships and other types of financial aid, visit the [Financial Aid website](#).

**Academic Works Scholarship System** Cal Poly Humboldt's new database makes it easier for you to find campus scholarships. The database allows current and prospective students to search for scholarships and automatically matches students to campus scholarships for which they may be eligible and recommends scholarships they should consider. The online application opens on November 15th of each year for the following academic year and closes on January 31st. For a full list of scholarships, visit [humboldt.academicworks.com](http://humboldt.academicworks.com)

### California Pre-Doctoral Program

The California Pre-Doctoral Program awards funds to a limited number of juniors, seniors and graduate students in the CSU system. These funds are designed to enable current students to explore and prepare to succeed in doctoral programs in their chosen field of study. Visit the [CSU website](#) for more information on this program.

### State University Grant

The State University Grant (SUG) is a resident grant designated to pay a portion of your tuition and fees. SUG is available to California residents who are enrolled at least half-time and pay California State University basic tuition fees as an undergraduate, graduate, or teaching credential student. It is recommended to apply early - complete your FAFSA and all requested documentation as soon as possible. All Californian applicants will be considered automatically, but not all eligible students will receive SUG due to limited funds.





## Tuition Fee Waivers

Two types of tuition waivers are available for graduate students:

1. Tuition Fee Waivers for Non-Resident Students: To be eligible, students must enroll in a minimum of 10 units and display exceptional scholastic ability or prior scholastic achievement. Individual programs decide who receives the fee waiver allocation.
2. Tuition Fee Waivers for Graduate Assistants and Teaching Associates (GA/TA): To be considered for financial assistance offered by some programs, including GA/TA waivers, you need to have filed a FAFSA by March 2nd. Contact your department's [Graduate Coordinator](#) for details on possible employment opportunities as a GA or TA.

# Graduate Studies Policies

## Admission to Cal Poly Humboldt

To be considered for admission, students at the time of enrollment should have completed a four-year college course of study and hold an acceptable baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution, or the equivalent academic preparation as determined by appropriate campus authorities. Students seeking admission should be in good academic standing at the last college or university attended, with a grade point average of at least 2.5 on the last degree completed or in the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units attempted. They should also satisfactorily meet the professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards for graduate study, including qualifying examinations, as appropriate campus authorities may prescribe.

### Admission to a Department or Program

Students meeting the above university requirements and desiring admission to a master's program must also be reviewed and accepted in the appropriate department. Application Requirements vary by Graduate Program. Check the [Graduate Program page](#), or contact the program's Graduate Coordinator, early in the process to make sure you have the most updated requirements. Students who meet the minimum requirements for graduate studies *may* be considered for admission in one of the following categories:

*Classified Graduate Standing:* Students in this category are admitted without conditions because they fulfill all of the professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards, including qualifying examinations, prescribed by the campus.

*Conditionally Classified:* Students may be admitted to a graduate degree program in this category if application deficiencies may be remedied by additional preparation.

## Grading

Grading symbols are interpreted the same for graduate students as for undergraduate students (Please see Catalog for details) with the following exceptions.

### Credit / No Credit Grading

A grade of Credit (CR) indicates satisfactory achievement of course requirements and is equivalent to a B- or higher grade. It is not used in grade point calculation. A grade of No Credit (NC) indicates unsatisfactory achievement for course requirements. This grade is not used in grade point calculation, however, some universities and many graduate and professional schools interpret an NC grade as F. NC is equivalent to a C+ or lower grade. Some graduate courses have a mandatory grade mode of CR/NC; no more than a third of the CR/NC courses

may count toward your degree. You may choose the CR/NC option for courses not required by your program. Students may take only one optional CR/NC course per semester at Humboldt State.

### **Report in Progress**

A grade of Report in Progress (RP) is used in conjunction with thesis, project, and other courses where work assigned extends beyond one academic term. The RP indicates that work is in progress but that assignment of a final grade must await completion of additional work. RP is not included in your grade point average. Work is to be completed in one year except for master's thesis/project courses. Master's thesis/project courses with an RP grade must be completed within seven years from the end of the term in which it was assigned. If you do not complete your additional work within one year (or seven years for thesis/project courses), the RP grade will be administratively changed to a grade of F (Failure) or NC (No Credit) depending on the grade mode of the course.

### **Other Administrative Symbols:**

**I (Incomplete):** The symbol **I** signifies that a portion of required coursework was not completed within the prescribed time due to unforeseen, yet fully justified, reasons and that there is still a possibility of earning credit. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process by notifying their instructor about their intentions and following the process to its completion. An incomplete must be made up within one calendar year immediately following the term in which it was assigned.

**W (Withdrawal):** You will be assigned a **W** for a course if you withdraw after the drop deadline and file the appropriate petition. A **W** is not counted in your GPA.

**WU (Withdrawal Unauthorized):** If you withdraw from a course without submitting an official withdrawal petition, you will receive a **WU** symbol. The **WU** symbol counts as an "F" for GPA calculation.

**SP (Satisfactory Progress):** This symbol signifies that the student's work is satisfactory to date, but the assignment of a precise grade must await the completion of additional coursework. Students must complete the work within the time specified and must not exceed one calendar year from first enrollment.

## **Full-Time Status**

Graduate students taking nine or more semester units, or post-baccalaureate students taking twelve or more semester units are enrolled full-time for student verification purposes.

## **Required GPA**

You must maintain a grade-point average of 3.0 (B) or better in all courses taken to satisfy your degree requirements. Courses in which no letter grade is assigned are not used in computing GPA.



## Seven-Year Limit

Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations limits the maximum time for completing a master's degree program to seven years. The seven years are calculated from the time of completion of the oldest course listed on your approved graduate course list. An extension may be granted, if warranted by individual circumstances and if the outdated coursework is validated by examination. You may petition for an extension with a Request for Program Variation or Waiver form and a completed Documentation of Examination for Currency for Extension of the Seven-Year Limit form for each course older than seven years.

## Withdrawal Policy

Before you decide to withdraw, We encourage you to discuss options (including the extended credit/no credit deadline with your academic advisor or with staff at the Office of the Registrar, [records@humboldt.edu](mailto:records@humboldt.edu) or 707-826-4101 or the Academic & Career Advising Center, 707-826-3341. You must formally withdraw from a course either before the Add/Drop period ends or by completing an Official Petition to Withdraw, otherwise, you may receive a WU on your permanent record, which is the equivalent to an "F." For more information on the withdrawal process and the different withdrawal periods, visit the [Office of the Registrar's website](#)

# Graduate Degree Requirements

## Coursework

Please refer to the University Catalog for the specific requirements of your program. General requirements for your master's degree programs are as specified by Title 5 are as follows:

- Complete a minimum of 30-semester units of approved coursework within a maximum of seven years. (See seven-year limit)
- 21 or more semester units must be completed at Cal Poly Humboldt (residency requirement) unless an exception is made; courses taken through Cal Poly Humboldt Extended Education cannot be used for resident credit;
- At least half the units required for the degree are graduate level (500-600 level courses)
- Lower division courses (100-200 level) cannot be counted toward the degree;
- No more than six thesis or project units will apply toward the degree with a maximum of nine total units for independent study, fieldwork, and thesis/project courses;
- B- or better in all courses taken to satisfy the requirements for the degree and maintain a grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better. A higher grade standard than the campus minimum (B-) may be specified by a graduate degree program.





## The Culminating Experience

Every master's degree program is required to include a culminating experience. The form of this experience differs according to degree programs, but all master's students must satisfactorily complete either a thesis, a project, or a comprehensive examination. All culminating experiences for the Master's degree, regardless of specific form or discipline, must document the student's achievement of the program learning outcomes at an appropriate level. All theses, projects, and comprehensive examination responses must be evaluated by at least two faculty members.

**Thesis:** A thesis is the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It identifies the problem, states major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation. Normally, an oral defense of the thesis is required.

**Project:** A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It is described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project's significance, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation. An oral defense of the project may be required.

**Comprehensive Examination:** A comprehensive examination assesses a student's ability to integrate knowledge of the area, show independent and critical thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. The results evidence independent thinking, appropriate organization, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation. Examination questions and responses are kept according to the CSU records retention policy.

### Deadlines

To meet the submission deadline for a specific term, all culminating experiences, including thesis, oral defense, projects, and comprehensive examinations must be completed prior to the deadline as listed below. Forms documenting satisfactory completion of comprehensive examinations are due in the Academic Programs / Graduate Studies office by 5 p.m. on the relevant deadline, as are master's theses and projects, in final format and accompanied by an approval form signed by all committee members.

➤ For up to date deadlines click [here](#)

Note: If the date falls on the weekend, the deadline will be extended to the following Monday

### Late Submissions

Your degree will be posted to your transcript for the following graduation date if your culminating experience is received in Academic Programs after the deadline.

### Summer Thesis/Project Submission

For Summer Thesis/Project submissions, it is required that your entire committee be present and available to review and sign off on the final submission. You are responsible for ensuring they are available during the summer semester.

### Publication

A digital copy of the thesis or project must be archived with the University Library. Embargo (delayed release) for a period of 1-5 years to allow for publication may be requested by the student. If needed for publication purposes, a one-to-five-year embargo may be requested when appropriate. For example, a publisher may allow deposit of published articles into an institutional repository but may place an embargo of one or more years before the article may be made publicly accessible. Such a postprint may be deposited into Digital Commons @ Cal Poly Humboldt as required for the degree, but no access to the item would be allowed for a period of one year. Note: Check your final document carefully. Any requests for editorial changes to a thesis/project after archival with Digital Commons @ Cal Poly Humboldt will be denied. Editorial changes include errors in punctuation and spelling, minor changes, or major changes to the interpretation of data or content.

## Committee Formation

Part of the Culminating Experience is Committee Formation. Your graduate committee should be formed during the second semester of your program. The number of committee members varies by program. You will select committee members in consultation with your major advisor, who serves as chair. You should strive to select committee members that will be the most help as you design and complete your thesis or project.

**Advisor** With rare exceptions, your major advisor/committee chair will be a tenured or probationary faculty member. If your major advisor is an adjunct faculty or in the faculty early retirement program (FERP), at least one committee member must be a tenured or probationary faculty member in your primary discipline.

**Committee Members** At least one committee member, in addition to your advisor, must be Cal Poly Humboldt faculty or adjunct faculty who hold a Ph.D. or other terminal degree. All theses, projects, and comprehensive examination responses must be evaluated by at least two of these committee members.

**Outside Committee Members** Persons with expertise/experience in your research area who are not affiliated with Cal Poly Humboldt or who do not hold a terminal degree can serve as an additional committee member. *Note:* The make-up of your graduate committee is reviewed by the graduate coordinator and graduate dean at the advancement to candidacy.

## Graduate Writing Requirement

On March 12, 2020, the California State University Chancellor's Office issued a memorandum that indefinitely suspended Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) testing.

# Academic Standing

## Good Standing

Graduate students whose Humboldt State cumulative GPA and overall GPA are 3.0 or above are considered in good academic standing.

## Academic Probation & Disqualification

Graduate students, including those who are classified or conditionally classified, and credential-seeking students will be placed on academic probation if their Humboldt State cumulative grade point average falls below a 3.0 (B grade average). A graduate coordinator may also notify a student of academic probation or disqualification for failure to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better in all courses taken to satisfy the requirements of the degree.

Graduate students may be placed on probation and/or disqualified for failure to make adequate progress in the program, as defined by the requirements and policies of individual programs, by recommendation of the program faculty and graduate coordinator, and action of the graduate dean. While on academic probation if a graduate student or a credential student's cumulative GPA at Cal Poly Humboldt is below a 3.0 for a second consecutive term, the student will be academically disqualified.

Graduate students may be placed on probation and/or disqualified for failure to make adequate progress in the program, as defined by the requirements and policies of individual programs, by recommendation of the program faculty and graduate coordinator, and action of the graduate dean.

**Readmission / Reinstatement:** Disqualified graduate students will not be allowed to register unless they are formally reinstated and/or readmitted to the university. Regularly enrolled students who are academically disqualified from Cal Poly Humboldt are not eligible to enroll in coursework through Extended Education

**First DQ:** Students may be immediately reinstated to the university given a positive recommendation from the graduate program including an agreement by a graduate faculty member to serve as the student's advisor submitted to the Graduate Studies Office.

**Second DQ:** Students must take a minimum of one semester off before reapplying. Students may be required to take additional time off. Students may be readmitted to the university given a positive recommendation from the Graduate Program including an agreement by a graduate faculty member to serve as the student's advisor. Students will be required to provide a letter with a statement describing the reasons for the academic probation and a plan to address the underlying problems in order to increase the likelihood of success. Both documents will be forwarded to the Graduate Studies Office for processing. After the absence period, an admission application is required for reinstatement consideration. Humboldt State reserves the right to accept applications for disqualified students during specified application terms only. Please contact the Admissions Office for more information.

**Third DQ:** No option to reapply to Cal Poly Humboldt. May complete coursework elsewhere and reapply to a different CSU campus.

## Catalog Rights

Your catalog rights are based on when and where you began college and how long you have been "continuously enrolled." If you have been enrolled either at a California Community College or a CSU campus for at least one semester or two quarters of consecutive calendar years, you are considered to be "in continuous attendance." If you maintain continuous



enrollment, you may choose to meet the requirements for graduation specified in the Cal Poly Humboldt catalog which was/is in effect, when you first enrolled in any CSU or California community college, first enrolled at Humboldt, or at the time you graduate.

## **Continuous Enrollment**

You are required to enroll for a minimum of one unit per term for at least two terms per academic year (fall, spring, summer) until your degree requirements are completed. Master's degree students who do not maintain continuous enrollment (two terms each academic year), and who have not been granted a leave of absence are required to reapply for admission to the university and to the graduate program. If readmitted, you will be subject to any new admission or degree requirements that have been approved since your first admission to the program.

## **Matriculated Enrollment**

If you have "substantial work" to do to complete your project/thesis you will register as a regularly enrolled student. The number of units registered would be estimated based on the amount of work required and the extent of faculty involvement.

## **Graduate Continuous Enrollment**

The minimum requirements to be eligible to enroll through extended education are that you have advanced to candidacy, completed all the coursework required for your degree, and have a current graduation date on file with the Office of the Registrar. Some departments allow graduate students to register for one unit of a discipline-specific x693 course through The College of Extended Education and Global Engagement (CEEAGE). Enrollment in the discipline-specific x693 course allows you to maintain continuous enrollment and maintain your status in the master's degree program. Please check with your graduate coordinator; additional requirements for registering through extended education vary by department. If you are planning on submitting your thesis/project during the summer semester but do not plan on enrolling in classes, you do not have to enroll in GCE

### **Examples of Continuous Enrollment**

For example, in the Biological Sciences department graduate students must have completed all the requirements above and in addition have their thesis approved by their committee and graduate coordinator. They may register in one unit of BIOL x693 to return to campus the following semester to deliver their thesis presentation.

For another example, Natural Resources allows graduate students to register through extended education after they have produced a complete first draft thesis and met the minimum requirements above.

Please refer to the [College of Extended Education and Global Engagement website](#) for information about campus privileges associated with enrollment through Extended Education.

## Educational Leave of Absence

An educational leave of absence must be requested if you will not be attending Cal Poly Humboldt each semester. You must attend at least one term prior to requesting a leave of absence. Submit your request to the Office of Academic Programs by the published deadline. Please refer to the Calendar of Activities and Deadlines for the last day to file Educational Leave. You must keep your Cal Poly Humboldt Preferred Email Address up-to-date. Cal Poly Humboldt will contact you via email with important registration information after your leave has ended. Please see the "Email Policy" in the university catalog.

The maximum duration of a single leave is one academic year; the total duration of combined leaves may not exceed 2 years. A leave of absence does not extend the seven-year time limit. If the leave changes your date of graduation, a Graduation Date Change Request must be submitted. If you are registered in any course work in the semester for which you are requesting leave you must officially drop the course using the Student Center. The instructor will not drop the class for you.

A leave of absence maintains continuing student status. This allows you to maintain catalog rights and eligibility to enroll for the term immediately after the expiration of the leave without reapplying to the university. You are not eligible for any university resources or services (computers, laboratories, the library, faculty supervision, etc.) while on leave. Therefore students must be currently enrolled in order to present findings, submit their final thesis/project, and graduate. Enrollment through Extended Education may be possible (please refer to Continuous Enrollment).

## Advancement to Candidacy

### Eligibility

You must have "classified" standing, a GPA of 3.0 or better, completed 12 to 15 units of approved coursework for the master's program, the approval of your advisor, committee, and graduate coordinator, and approval of any plan to use humans or animals as subjects for research, if applicable. (See Human and Animal Protection for more information).

### Paperwork: Application for Advancement to Candidacy and Graduation

Once your advancement to candidacy is approved, you are officially a candidate for your master's degree. The advancement to candidacy document is a contract between you and Cal Poly Humboldt that details the requirements of your degree. Make an appointment with your advisor to discuss your coursework and culminating experience. It may be helpful to bring a copy of your transcript to your meeting. Consult the university catalog for the degree requirements of your master's program. List only those courses constituting your program.



Degree requirements are those that are in effect at the time you were admitted into the master's program.

## Filing your ATC

- Please submit your form through AdobeSign by visiting the [Advancement to Candidacy and Graduation](#) section on the Forms and Policies page of our website. At the top of the page, you will find instructions for Using AdobeSign. Make sure you are signed in as your Humboldt email address and try using Google Chrome as opposed to other browsers.
- Before your ATC can be approved, the graduation fee must be paid online through your student center or on campus at Student Financial Services, SBS 285.
- You will need to attach a copy of your approval from the IRB or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee if applicable.
- Submit the ATC after completing 12 to 15 units of approved coursework and no later than your last 6 units **and** before enrolling in your Culminating Experience
- The ATC must be signed by your advisor and graduate coordinator before it's submitted to Graduate Studies for final approval.
- You must report any proposed changes in your course of study or your committee members to Graduate Studies using the Request for Program Variation form
- Your ATC remains valid only if you maintain continuous enrollment in the University as previously defined in this handbook. If readmitted after an absence, you must complete a new ATC that meets current curricular requirements.
- You must complete all required coursework and your Culminating Experience within the seven-year time limit.

## Deadlines

There is no official deadline to advance to candidacy. It is recommended that students pursuing master's degrees apply for graduation by the census date of at least one semester before finishing all degree requirements. Please refer to the Calendar of Activities and Deadlines for specific dates. An additional fee will be assessed after the published date. Early application ensures that you will receive your degree check in time for adequate planning for your final semester(s) of enrollment.

## Degree Check

Once your application for graduation is received, a degree check is prepared and sent to you and your advisor. The degree check summarizes how degree requirements have been satisfied and lists any remaining requirements. You are encouraged to contact the Office of the Registrar if you have any questions about your degree check or need an update on your progress toward your degree objective. If graduation needs to be postponed, a [Graduation Date Change Request form](#) must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar. If the graduation date has already passed, a reapplication fee is charged.



## Program Variation

A change of your advisor, a committee member, or any coursework listed on your program contract must be proposed with a Request for Program Variation or Waiver. A change to your type of culminating experience must be requested with an Addendum to Advancement to Candidacy form. Forms are available on the [Graduate Programs website](#). The changes must be approved by your major professor, committee members, graduate coordinator, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## Commencement & Graduation

### Commencement

Students wanting to walk in the Fall or Spring Commencement ceremony are required to register in advance. In order to register for commencement, you must have an Application for Advancement to Candidacy on file and approved. To be included in the commencement program, you must have your Application for Advancement to Candidacy approved by a specific date that will be announced at the beginning of the semester. You may participate in Commencement if you received a degree from Cal Poly Humboldt during the past summer or fall semesters, or if you have applied for graduation and expect to be awarded your degree at the end of the spring, summer, or fall semesters. Details regarding the commencement ceremony are available online at [commencement.humboldt.edu](http://commencement.humboldt.edu).

### Graduating with Distinction

The Patricia O. McConkey Awards recognize outstanding students graduating with a master's degree from each program. Each program may select a recipient based on academic performance, academic citizenship, and the quality of the student's thesis, project, or comprehensive exam. Students who receive the award will "graduate with distinction." This title will appear on the official Cal Poly Humboldt transcripts. Recipients will be invited to attend the Outstanding Students Award Ceremony and Reception (Recognizing Students Who Make a Difference) held in the spring at Cal Poly Humboldt and will receive a certificate of award. Recipients are also allowed to purchase a gold stole for commencement that identifies them as graduating with distinction.

### Posting Degree and Receiving Diploma

You will receive a diploma cover during the commencement ceremony. After semester grades are processed, degree checks are reviewed for all candidates for graduation for that term in the Office of the Registrar. After all degree requirements are satisfied, your degree will be posted to your academic record. Diplomas are printed and sent out to graduated students approximately three to four months after the end of the term they graduated.

## Human & Animal Protections

If your research involves human participants or animals, you are required to submit an Institutional Review Board and/or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee research application so that the committee can determine the appropriate level of review.

## Use of Human Subjects in Research

Cal Poly Humboldt is committed to promoting, encouraging, and facilitating academic and clinical research. The purpose of Cal Poly Humboldt's Policy for Protection of Human Subjects in Research is both to protect the rights and well-being of human subjects of research and to support the research efforts of Cal Poly Humboldt faculty and students. This policy encourages recognition of the basic ethical principles for the use of human subjects, respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

If you have a research project that includes humans or data on humans in any way, you must submit a proposal to the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, also known as the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This will ensure that your project will not only comply with Federal regulations, it will also protect the rights and well-being of your subjects. Please refer to Humboldt's [Cal Poly Humboldt IRB](#) for the Protection of Human Subjects website.

## Use of Animals in Research

Our Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) strives to facilitate the efforts of our faculty and students to produce quality research and teaching experiences. At the same time, we have been appointed by the University President to monitor and share the responsibility of ensuring that individuals associated with Cal Poly Humboldt who work with vertebrate animals do so in compliance with relevant state and federal laws.

Prior to initiating a research project involving animals or incorporating animals in a teaching program, you and your advisor should review the laws that may regulate your work (note that individual students and their faculty advisors are held legally responsible for complying with these laws). The next stage of the process involves obtaining approval, and permits when necessary, from the appropriate governing bodies. Finally, the faculty member or student must submit a completed Section 5 protocol to the IACUC for in-house review. It is illegal to use animals for any purpose without first obtaining the necessary permits from federal and state agencies and without obtaining approval from the IACUC.

The protocol application form used by Cal Poly Humboldt is relatively short and, if sufficient time has been spent planning the research, takes only a short time to complete. The form is updated



at irregular intervals. Please refer to the Cal Poly Humboldt [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) website for more information.

## Changing Programs

### **Change to an Option within the Program**

Students enrolled in English, Environmental Systems, Natural Resources, and Psychology master's programs may switch to another option within the program by completing a "Request for Program Variation or Waiver" form available on the Graduate Studies website via AdobeSign.

### **Change to Another Master's Program**

Students who want to change from one master's program to another will need to completely reapply. This includes completing the CSU application and paying the \$55 application fee. In addition, they will need to submit supplemental application materials required by the program to which they are applying. Only one application per term can be submitted.

## Preparing for the Future

### **Applying for Jobs**

For most graduates, finding a job is the next step. This is a difficult task, but resourcefulness, networking, and persistence will help you land the best job possible. You might not get your dream job right away, be open to other opportunities such as internships and volunteer work. These opportunities may open the doors to stable employment and will expand your network in the field of your choice. The key to attaining a job in your field is knowing your value and casting a wide net, which your graduate degree will prepare you to do!



## Applying for Doctoral Programs

When applying to doctoral programs, research the program focus and faculty interests. Find programs that align with your values, research goals, and faculty research areas. Research the program requirements and deadlines; submit your applications on time.

## Resumes and Cover Letters

A resume and cover letter are well-structured presentations of your skills, accomplishments, and work history. Every time you apply for a job, your résumé and cover letter should be specific and tailored to that role. If you need help constructing a résumé, visit the [Academic and Career Advising Center](#). They can provide you with assistance with résumés, cover letters, and general job search strategies.

## Official Transcripts

All doctoral programs and an increasing number of jobs require that you submit official, unopened transcripts. It would be easier to order transcripts before you leave campus.

## Requesting Letters of Recommendation

Many internships, employers, and schools require letters of recommendation. To ensure that you receive a glowing letter, use the tips below to help your recommender write a strong support letter. Be sure to provide your recommender with the following:

- *A courtesy meeting.* We strongly suggest that you meet with any academic or professional references to tell them more about you and your academic program. This will allow them to personalize the recommendation for you and explain why you are a great candidate. Be sure to provide them with your most current name, phone number, or email address for follow-up.
- *Information about you.* Although the recommender has agreed to write a recommendation, you should still provide him/her with some information about you. In what capacity do you know the recommender (class, internship, lab, etc.)? When did you meet the instructor? What grade did you receive in their course? What was your program GPA? Did you write a paper or complete a project for the faculty member? If so,



state what you did. Did you have a difficult semester? How did you overcome that semester and improve? What are you working on? What are your goals? What are some of your biggest accomplishments? This information will help your recommender when writing the letter.

- *Materials Requested.* Remember you asked them to write about you—provide them with the information they need to do so! Some recommenders may request that you submit additional materials so that they can successfully write a complete letter on your behalf. Some things they may request are a short personal statement, resume or CV, writing sample, and unofficial transcripts. Be sure to provide your recommender with a folder with all the information and due dates so that they can keep the material you give them in one place.
- *The submission process.* Does your letter of recommendation need to be submitted online, mailed, or part of a larger packet? These are details that the recommender should know. If it is an online process, provide your recommender with the necessary steps to complete the online process because it requires more time to respond. If your letter needs to be mailed, provide your recommender with a typed, addressed, and stamped envelope.

**Tips:**

- Provide faculty with sufficient time to write a letter of recommendation. Give your recommender three to four weeks to write your letter of recommendation. This is a process that should not be rushed. To facilitate a response, give a deadline one week ahead of your planned application submission date.
- Only ask for a letter from someone with whom you have a positive relationship. Do not ask faculty whose course you have not taken or in whose class you received a poor grade. Do not ask a program chair or dean to write a letter if you did not work with the person directly.
- Remember to provide the recommender or faculty with a friendly reminder. Although you have provided them with a deadline date, a friendly reminder will help them complete and submit on time.