

Graduate Student Handbook 2012-2013



The People Profession
Department of
Family & Consumer Sciences

Dear Graduate Student:

The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences is pleased to welcome you to the graduate program. We hope that you will find the program intellectually stimulating, enjoyable, and personally and professionally profitable.

This handbook is designed to be used in conjunction with the current California State University, Northridge catalog (available for purchase in the Matador Bookstore). *The Graduate Student: An Information Booklet*, and the Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses, Graduate Projects and Comprehensive Exam (available from the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs). Become familiar with the rules and regulations governing graduate students by reading these booklets.

The Graduate Coordinator can answer your questions and or refer you to the appropriate person or office. Therefore, it is further suggested that you make an appointment with the FCS Department Graduate Coordinator prior to, or shortly after, being admitted to the graduate program. If at anytime in your studies you have questions or concerns, you should consult with the Graduate Coordinator, Department Chair, or your major advisor or thesis/project chair.

This handbook is divided into several sections. The first section is entitled “Answers to the Most Frequently Asked Questions.” The questions and answers are arranged in chronological sequence from admission through the program requirements to graduation. It is recommended that you read the entire section from start to finish. Then as you progress through your course of study you can review the topics as needed. Note that in the right hand margin, printed in bold, is the topic referred to in the question/answer. The margin notes have been provided so that you can quickly find the answers you need at the time you need them.

Other sections of the handbook provide further explanations of the information contained in the question/answer section. The sections are: important dates for the thesis/project/comprehensive exam; policies and guidelines for the thesis/project/comprehensive exam, organizations and activities, financial resources, scholarship, and departmental governance of graduate studies.

On page 7 you will find a diagram to assist you in finding the section you need and to provide an overview to the process of moving through your graduate program.

Graduate Committee
Last revised on March 2012

We hope that your graduate study is filled with stimulating experiences. We look forward to working with you in structuring a superior program of graduate study.

Sincerely,

Tami Abourezk Ph.D., Interim Chair
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Revised March 20, 2012
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Flow Chart of Family and Consumer Sciences Graduate Program

Application for Admission (p.1)
 You must have a 3.0 GPA or Higher for the Bachelor's degree
OR have a 2.5-2.9 GPA and at least 50% on one GRE section

Admitted

If you meet all of the following requirements

Have a Bachelor's degree in FCS, or the equivalent, from an accredited college or university? (Must have been obtained within the last 7 years)

Meet the prerequisite for entering the graduate program in a specialized field of FCS?

Have FCS 580 or the equivalent within the last five years?

Have passed Upper Division Writing Proficiency Exam?

Meet the minimum requirement for TOEFL score, if you are an international student?

"Yes" to all of the previous questions

"No" to one or more of the previous questions

"No" to all of the previous questions

Admitted as Classified Graduate Status

Admitted as conditionally classified graduate student (p.3)

Admission denied

Choose major advisor and graduate program committee (p.5)

Conditions fulfilled

File program of study (p.5)

Advancement to candidacy (p.5)

Culminating Experience (p.8)
 -Thesis or Project (p8-9), OR
 -Comprehensive Exam (p10)

Graduation (p. 11)

How can I be admitted to graduate study? Admission to graduate study at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) is a two-step process. First, you must be admitted by the university. To apply for graduate study you must submit an official application to the university and pay the application fee. You may obtain an application packet by calling Admissions and Records (A&R) (818-677-3700) and requesting a graduate application packet (Specify the graduate, not undergraduate application). You must have a bachelor's degree, such as BA or BS from an accredited university, be in good standing at the last institution you attended, and have at least a 2.5 grade point average (GPA) in the last 60 units. If you meet these criteria, admission to the university allows you to enroll in courses, but it does not mean you have been admitted for the Master of Science Degree in Family and Consumer Sciences conferred by the Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Department. You will receive a letter from Admissions and Records after your records have been received indicating admission or rejection into the university.

University Admission

The second step in the process is admission to the FCS Department. After being admitted by the university, your application is forwarded to the FCS Department where the Department Chair/area representative will determine if you meet the admission requirements (Note: If you have been rejected by the university, the FCS Department will never receive your application). The FCS Department has higher admission requirements than the University. You must have at least a 2.5 overall GPA for all your undergraduate course work, not only the last 60 units, to be admitted to the FCS Department. If your GPA is between 2.5 and 2.9, you must take the GRE (See next section). (*Note: Only students who have been accepted in the FCS MS program are eligible to enroll in FCS Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Science graduate level classes.*)

FCS Admission

If you meet these criteria you will receive a letter from the FCS Department indicating whether or not you have been admitted to the FCS graduate program. If you are rejected by the department, your application will be returned to Admissions and Records; they will also inform you that your application has not been accepted. If you have any questions concerning your admission status you may call Admissions and Records, the FCS Department Chair, or the FCS Graduate Coordinator at any point in the process.

Do I have to take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE)? For applicants whose GPAs of 3.0 or over, the GRE is not required. Applicants to the following programs might be accepted "conditionally" if their GPA is between 2.5-2.99 at the time of admission to the areas of Interior Design, Apparel Design and Merchandising, Consumer Affairs and Family Studies. Once you accepted in the area, you will need to take the GRE and score at or above the 50th percentile on one of the three sections: verbal, quantitative, or analytic BEFORE completing 12 units. Exception: Applicants to Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Science with GPA between 2.5-2.99 must submit proper GRE scores with application.

GRE Test

You may obtain information concerning the GRE in the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs. If you have anxiety about the exam, we recommend that you take a prep course. These are available through the CSUN Office of Continuing Education or off-campus companies.

What's my graduate status? So, you've been admitted to graduate study by the university and the FCS Department! Congratulations! Now, what's your next step? **Graduate Status**

You should make an advisement appointment with the Graduate Coordinator or Department Chair, or attend a group advisement at this time. Call the FCS office for further details (818-677-3051).

You may be admitted to FCS as a classified student or conditionally classified student. Your letter from the FCS Department specifies which status you have obtained. Your status as a classified graduate student should be cleared before completing 12 units of graduate level classes.

In order to be classified at the time of admission, you must meet the classified status criteria, as follows: **Classified Status**

1. A Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in the same area of Family and Consumer Sciences as designated for the Master's of Science Degree.
2. A Bachelor's Degree awarded no more than 7 years prior to application at CSUN.
3. A 3.0 GPA or higher for the Bachelor's Degree OR a GPA of 2.5-2.9 and at least 50% on one section of the GRE.
4. A passing grade on the university's Upper Division Writing Proficiency Exam (UDWPE).
5. Meet the prerequisites for entering the graduate program in a specialized field of Family and Consumer Science (FCS 380 or FCS 580 OL)

If you are classified, great going! You are ready to submit a Program of Study form. Proceed to the section titled Major Advisor.

What if I haven't met the criteria? If you have not met all these criteria, you have been admitted as conditionally classified. This means you have not met one or more of the above requirements and a condition to your admission to the program has been imposed. You must remove these conditions before you have taken 12 units of course work in order to get fully classified from the graduate coordinator. The reasons for not meeting the requirements for classification and the steps you must take to correct the situation are listed below: **Conditionally Classified Status**

1. You have a Bachelor's Degree awarded more than 7 years prior to your application to CSUN for this degree.
Condition: You may need to update your undergraduate education by taking one or more courses required by your area of specialization.
2. You have a Bachelor's Degree that is not in Family and Consumer Sciences or a related field.
Condition: You must take FCS 380 or FCS 580 OL (formerly FCS 499A and 690M [Independent Study]) in addition to several prerequisite undergraduate courses that might be required by your major.
3. You have a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in a different area of Family and Consumer Sciences or a different major.
Condition: You must complete any prerequisites required by the Department/option/area of specialization and FCS 380 if not taken within the past five years.
4. You have an overall GPA below 3.0 for the Bachelor's Degree.
Condition: You must complete the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) with a score of at least 50% in one section (verbal, quantitative, analytic).
5. You have not passed the University Upper Division Writing Proficiency Test.
Condition: The test must be taken and passed. All students, including international students, must pass this test.
6. You are an international student who has not attended for at least three years school at the secondary level or beyond where English is the principal language of instruction.
Condition: The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) must be passed with a minimum Paper-Based score of 550, a minimum Computer-Based score of 213 or a minimum Internet-Based score of

79/80, and you must complete the Test of Written English with a score of 4.5 or above. If you score below 4.5 on the TWE you need to enroll in English 090 during your first semester in residence.

If I am conditionally classified, may I enroll in FCS courses? Yes. If you are conditionally classified, you may enroll in coursework, but you need to work toward the classified status as soon as possible. You must remove all conditions placed on you before you have completed 12 units of graduate coursework (i.e. units that are counted toward your 30 units of graduate work). **12 Unit Rule**

Note: If you fail to complete the required conditions prior to completing more than 12 units of graduate level coursework in your program, you will be unable to count those units beyond the 12-unit limit for your MS Degree.

What is the UDWP requirement? The California State University system requires that all undergraduates and graduate students pass the Upper Division Writing Proficiency Exam (UDWP) at CSUN before they can receive a Degree. The UDWP must be completed before you can be classified. *If you have passed the UDWP as an undergraduate at any CSU campus, UC Davis or Occidental College, then you will be exempt from this requirement!*

**Upper Division
Writing
Proficiency**

What is FCS 580 OL (formerly FCS 499A or 690M) and why do I need to take it for classified status? If you did not major in FCS or a related discipline as an undergraduate, or your undergraduate degree has been earned in another country, you will be required to take FCS 580 OL (or FCS 380) in order to be classified. The purpose of the requirement is to introduce you to the integrative nature of FCS, the areas of specialization, and historical, philosophical, and professional issues of the discipline. This introduction to our field is done through independent study. When you enroll in FCS 580 OL, you will be given a package of materials, which includes questions to be answered and a list of references to consult. Your paper will be due toward the end of the semester. Normally students enroll in FCS 580 OL in fall or spring semesters. The one unit of credit given for FCS 580 OL is considered a prerequisite to classification and therefore is not placed on the program. Failure to successfully complete 580 OL within the student's first year 12 units will result in dismissal from the graduate program.

**FCS 580 OL,
Theories in Family
and Consumer
Sciences**

How do I become classified? What do I do when I have met the conditions placed on my status? When you have fulfilled all the conditions placed on your admission within the first 12 units during your graduate coursework, you need to make an appointment with the Graduate Coordinator. You will need to take all needed documents with you to this appointment. Documents might include: GRE scores, Upper Division Writing Proficiency Exam scores, and graduate course grades. Together, you will fill out a “Request for Classification” form; the Graduate Coordinator will provide the form. Each condition and the date was completed will be listed on the form. The Graduate Coordinator will submit the completed form to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs (GRIP) to obtain approval from the Associate Vice President of the university. You will be informed of final approval by mail.

**Obtaining
Classified Status**

**Removing
Conditions**

Special Considerations: Dietetic Internship: If you have been accepted into the MS program as part of the Dietetic Internship, you must maintain a 3.0 or higher in each class. Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the Dietetic Internship, as well as the graduate program.

**Special
Considerations:
Dietetic Internship**

How do I get a major advisor? When you see the Graduate Coordinator for the first time, he/she will help direct you to a faculty member in your area of specialization. We attempt to match your interests with those of the faculty. This faculty member will be teaching graduate classes in your area of specialization and will be able to advise you as to which classes to take and in which sequence you should take those courses. He/she will also discuss prerequisites and requirements with you. This person is your major advisor and will assist you in developing your program and will also fill out your Program of Study form and may also become your thesis/project or comprehensive exam chair. However, after getting to know other faculty in your area you may decide to change your advisor. This is perfectly acceptable. As a matter of fact, you may change advisors at any time before beginning your thesis/project/comprehensive exam during your graduate studies, as long as another faculty member is willing to become your major advisor.

Major Advisor

What is required to be advanced to candidacy? When you have been classified and filed an official program you will be advanced to candidacy for the MS Degree. Whether you were originally classified or conditionally classified makes no difference; after you are classified and have filed a program you will become a candidate for the Master’s Degree.

**Advancement to
Candidacy**

What is a Program of Study? A Program of Study indicates an official form for specifying the courses you will take for the MS Degree. The form may be obtained in the FCS Department Office. The form lists the 30 units of graduate courses you need to take to fulfill the requirements for the MS Degree. It is signed by you, your advisor, two other faculty members and the Graduate Coordinator. It becomes a sort of contract between you and the university. When you complete the program, the university will grant you a MS Degree.

Program of Study

It is important that you plan a tentative Program of Study in your first semester of enrollment, although you may or may not officially file the program at this time. This planning will be done with your advisor. As soon as you are classified, you will need to file an official program form.

What is a graduate program committee and how do I get one? A graduate program committee is made up of at least three people. The first is your major advisor who should be a FCS faculty member in your area of specialization with a doctorate degree. You and your major advisor, together, select the second member, who should also be an FCS faculty in your area of specialization, ideally, but not always with a doctorate degree. The third member can be outside of your area of specialization, selected from one of the four alternatives:

Graduate Program Committee

1. From the FCS Department outside your area of specialization
or
2. A faculty member from another CSUN department
or
3. An individual from off-campus (in which case the member must file a resume with the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs before approval can be given)
or
4. A faculty member at CSUN who has a doctorate, or other terminal degree (e.g. MS [RD] MFA, MD, or JD), in which case the person must submit a resume to, and get a letter of approval from the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs.

In some cases, such as a thesis/project, a fourth member of a committee may be appropriate. This person might be from an off-campus location where the research is being conducted or a person who has been or will be helpful to your thesis/project. The fourth person need not have a doctorate.

All members of your graduate program committee will approve and sign your program form, help guide you through your thesis/project, or advise you on how to study for the comprehensive exam.

What courses can go on my Program of Study? The formal program consists of 30-33 units of approved graduate level work. You may take other courses, but only 30 units should be placed on the formal program if you are using the thesis/project option. Students selecting the comprehensive examination option as the culminating experience (details explained shortly) will have 30 units plus 3 units for the comprehensive examination on the formal program..

Courses on Your Program of Study

Of the 30-33 units, at least 21 units must be courses at the 500/600 level in area of specialization, including FCS 681 and 682 which are required of all students. Up to nine (9) units of the 30-33 units may be 400, 500, or 600 level courses from a different area of specialization than the major option. These courses may be from another department or from another option within the FCS Department and must be approved by your major advisor. The remaining units can be 400 level courses in your area of specialization.

A word about 400 level courses: these must be selected with care since some 400 level courses are approved for graduate credit and some are not. Your major advisor should guide you in this matter.

The specific type of culminating experience (i.e., thesis/project or comprehensive examination) that you select is to be identified on your program at the time the program is filed.

Some clarification about the 30 units:

<u>Thesis/Project</u>	Units
8 3-unit classes	24
2 3-unit thesis/project classes (FCS696C and FCS698C)	6
Total	30
<u>Comprehensive Exam</u>	
10 3-unit classes	30
1 3-unit comprehensive exam (FCS697C)	3 (not counted)
Total	30 (33)

The formal program is prepared on “The Program for the MS Degree in FCS” form available in the FCS Department Office and must be approved and signed by the student’s graduate program committee and by the Graduate Coordinator and then must be certified by the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs. This program becomes the official record of the courses you will take to complete the MS Degree. You are responsible for picking up the program form in the FCS Department Office and obtaining the signatures of your advisor, the committee members, and the graduate coordinator. The form should then be returned to the FCS Department Office. The FCS Office will make a copy for your files and

forward it to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs.

What else do I need to know about the courses on my Program of Study?

There are few other rules governing the program:

**More Rules about
the Program of
Study**

- ◆ No more than 6 units of independent study may be included in the program.
- ◆ No more than 9 units of transfer work or extension work may appear in the program and there are many stipulations placed on these courses. These courses must have a letter grade assigned to them. (See the graduate coordinator about these courses.)
- ◆ None of the courses on the program may have been used for any other Degree earned.
- ◆ Students pursuing a Graduate Degree must maintain a minimum 3.0 (B) cumulative GPA. No grade below a “B” can be counted in the formal program. A maximum of 6 units in the formal program may be repeated at the graduate level. The repeat grade will appear on the transcript.

Are there courses that must be on my Program of Study? Yes. Everyone, regardless of your option/area of specialization, must take FCS 681 (3 units) and FCS 682 (3 units). FCS 681, is a prerequisite for FCS 682. It is recommended that you take FCS 681 as soon as possible in your studies. If you have not taken introductory statistics before, it is recommended to take FCS 380 or an undergraduate statistic classes prior to signing up for FCS 681.

Required Courses

Your option/area of specialization also has required courses. Some graduate courses have required prerequisite/s that must be completed before you are admitted into graduate-level courses. Please consult with your major advisor for these requirements.

What if I need to make changes in my Program of Study? You may modify the program after it is filed, provided you have agreement from your major advisor, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs. A form titled “Course Substitution for Change in Master’s Formal Program” may be obtained in the FCS office for this purpose.

**Changes in
Program of Study**

What is the culminating experience? The FCS Department offers three kinds of culminating experiences: a thesis, a project or a comprehensive exam. Each experience has advantages and limitations. The selection is up to you and your major advisor, and individual circumstances will determine, in great part, which experience you select.

Culminating Experience

When do I have to choose my culminating experience? You will need to select one of these options at the time you file your program of study. However, you may change your mind and make another selection up until the time you enroll in the courses for the thesis/project or comprehensive exam.

What else is important for me to know? The purpose of the culminating experience (thesis, project, comprehensive exam) is to learn to assimilate the theories, concepts, and knowledge gained during your graduate experience, including coursework, internships, seminars, etc. Successful completion of coursework does not guarantee automatic passing of the thesis, project, or comprehensive exam.

What is the difference between a thesis and a project? Both the thesis and project involve a complete review of existing literature on a topic and leads to an original piece of work created by the student. The major difference between the two is the outcome, the piece of work created.

Difference between Thesis or Project

A thesis involves undertaking a systematic process of inquiry and results in original research which investigates a point of view that is expressed as a hypothesis, concept, or question. The thesis research methodology can involve approaches that are qualitative or quantitative, analytic or systemic, inductive or deductive, positivistic or naturalistic.

Thesis

A quantitative approach involves some kind of investigation of a selected population and frequently generates statistical data that can be analyzed by a computer. A qualitative approach involves words, not numbers. There are many forms of qualitative methods. Some examples are: critical analysis of historical records; content analysis of a naturalistic phenomenon; establishing typologies of objects or artifacts; and the development or formation of theoretical constructs.

The project usually involves qualitative research and always results in a tangible output of some kind, such as a manual for a community agency, a curriculum guide or an original design project. While the project may not involve an experiment, it may involve some limited statistical analysis, which may or may not involve a computer. The project always has an evaluation component; that is, the product you produce must be evaluated by a panel of experts, consumers or judges, as well as your project committee.

Project

Thesis	Project
Develops research and measurement skills in your area of specialization.	Develops practical professional skills.
May develop your computer skills and statistical knowledge. Increases your library research techniques and facilitates your writing skills.	Increases library research skills and facilitates writing skills.
Is good preparation for doctoral work.	May provide a service to the community.
Requires an oral defense.	Requires an oral defense.
Leads to possible professional presentations.	Leads to possible professional presentations.
Leads to possible publication with or without your advisor.	Leads to possible publication of the product.

Both the thesis and the project require an oral defense and an online submission for the final thesis/project.

The corresponding websites are:

<http://www.csun.edu/grip/graduatestudies/thesis/>

Electronic Thesis/Dissertation website login page:

<http://etd.csun.edu>

For help with the ETD:

<http://etd.csun.edu/help.php>

Three to six units of course credit for the thesis/project may be counted in your 30 units toward the MS Degree.

What is Special Master's Registration? The Special Master's Registration is designed to allow students to enroll, for a minimum fee; during the *two-year time limit* it may take them to complete their thesis, 4 enrollments only. **Special Master's Registration** (FCS696C) is available *only* to students who have completed all of the coursework listed on their final formal Program of Study. A letter grade will be assigned upon completion of thesis.

In the event students exceed these enrollments they will be required to enroll in a minimum of 1 unit of coursework in order to fulfill the University requirement of enrollment during the semester in which they will graduate.

What is the comprehensive exam like? The comprehensive exam is a one-week, take-home exam over the competencies associated with your area as well as Family and Consumer Sciences in general. You will be given six essay questions which may require you to expound on theories, cite and review a body of research, design a research project, and/or solve a clinical problem. You will be given one calendar week to complete your exams.

Comprehensive Exam

If you select the comprehensive exam you will need 33 units of coursework on your program. This means you will probably be **taking two more** courses than students who select the thesis/project option since they receive 3-6 units for the thesis/project.

You must sign up for FCS 697C for units, but you do not get 3 units of university course credit for taking the exam. On your program form this appears as “30 (33)” units. You must be a classified graduate student before you request enrollment in FCS 697C. Unclassified students will not be able to enroll.

Prior to enrolling in FCS 697C, you must have a completed program form on file, signed by your Chair (major advisor) and two other committee members. All committee members’ signatures and student signature must be on the program form.

You must complete all the other requirements for the MS Degree before or during the semester in which you take the exam.

Here is what the University Says about the Comprehensive Exam Guidelines

Each master’s program that offers a comprehensive examination option is required to maintain University-approved guidelines for the administration of the examination, and these guidelines are to be available on request. The following regulations apply in all cases:

1. Students become eligible to attempt the examination during the semester in which all required coursework will be completed. The upper division written exam must be passed prior to the examination.
2. Ordinarily, the examination is given at least one month before the end of the semester. Arrangements to enroll and take the examination should be made with the Graduate Coordinator in your department.
3. If the examination is not completed in the final semester, students must register again for the examination the semester in which they plan to complete their degree. These additional units may not be counted as units toward the master’s degree.
4. Students may not take the comprehensive examination more than twice.
 - a. Students who fail the examination at the first attempt will be required to register for the examination again for the semester in which the second attempt is offered. You will need to enroll in FCS 697C (3 units) again.
 - b. Students who fail the first attempt will be required to submit a Course Repeat form to the

Graduate Studies office with the approval of the graduate coordinator once enrolled for the second attempt. Students who have not submitted this form to Graduate Studies in a timely manner will not be allowed to take the exam that semester.

- c. Failure of the second attempt of the comprehensive examination results in the disqualification from the Master's program in that department.
- d. The first attempt is defined as the complete comprehensive examination prescribed by the Master's program. The second attempt is defined as retaking a second examination on the entire program, or, at the discretion of the department, a supplementary examination on any part or parts of the first examination on which the student failed.
- e. Graduate Coordinators shall file the result of each examination with the Office of Graduate Studies.
- f. Once students have chosen the option of the comprehensive exam and enrolled in, and/or attempted the comprehensive examination and failed it (or any part), they are normally not eligible to change to any of the Thesis, Graduate Project, or Artistic Performance options.

How many courses should I take each semester? Generally a full-load for a graduate student is 9-12 units. On rare occasions, 15 units may be permitted. If you are working full or part time, you should probably take 3 to 6 units each semester. Our graduate courses are usually scheduled to accommodate working students, therefore they are normally held in the late afternoons and evenings. However, undergraduate courses needed for prerequisites to the graduate courses are often offered during the day.

Course Load

What GPA must I maintain as a graduate student? You must have a 3.0 overall GPA or better in all coursework you take in order to be in good standing at this university. Any prerequisite courses, electives, and courses taken for personal development are figured in the GPA, as well as the courses placed on your program. In addition, the FCS Department requires a grade of B or better in all graduate courses, in addition to prerequisite courses, regardless of your overall GPA. Courses with B- grade or below will not be accepted as part of your graduate plan coursework. If a grade of B- or lower is received in any graduate class that is a required part of the MS, that class *must* be repeated, and the student must received a B or higher.

GPA Requirement

What if I am placed on probation? If you fall below 3.0 in all units attempted, you will be placed on probation. You must raise your GPA to a 3.0 overall GPA the semester after being placed on probation or you will be disqualified. Being disqualified means that you can no longer pursue your studies at CSUN. You should see the Graduate Coordinator immediately upon being placed on probation.

Probation

How many courses can I repeat? Students may repeat a maximum of 2 different courses or 6 units with consultation with Graduate Coordinator.

Course Repeat Policy

How long do I have to finish my Degree? Unlike coursework for the undergraduate Degree which lasts indefinitely, graduate coursework has a shelf life of only seven years. That means from the time you take your first course that is on your graduate program, you have seven years in which to complete all the requirements for the Degree. If your CSUN courses become older than seven years, see your major advisor and the Graduate Coordinator about validating the courses. (With permission, you may be able to validate the old courses through written examination.)

Time Requirement

I need to take some time off from my studies... Graduate students in good standing may take up to 2 semesters off without losing their enrollment privileges at the university. One exception to this occurs during the first semester of the graduate program. During your first semester, you must be enrolled in at least one class or you will be automatically dropped from the graduate program. Discuss your leave with the Graduate Coordinator before you interrupt your studies.

Leave of Absence

Now, I'm ready for graduation... Before you can graduate, you must apply for graduation. This should be done during the semester immediately preceding the semester in which you expect to graduate. Applying for graduation involves paying a fee; there is also a fee required to change your date of graduation. This might occur if you didn't finish the thesis/project when you thought you would. Applications for graduation are available at the Student Information Center in the Admissions Building.

Graduation

Am I graduating with Honors? Graduate students who maintain an overall GPA of 3.885 or higher in the coursework on the program will graduate with distinction; this will be posted on your Degree.

Honors

A word about your Degree..... At the present time the FCS Department offers graduate level specializations in the areas of Apparel Design and Merchandising, Family Studies, Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Science, Consumer Affairs, Interior Design, and General FCS studies. However, the only degree granted by the department is the MS in Family and Consumer Sciences. At the present time, the CSU system has not allowed the department to list the names of the specialization on the degree.

Degree Name

Important Dates for Thesis/Project

If you are planning on presenting your research proposal or completing a thesis/project during the Fall or Spring, the following deadlines are to be used as a guide. Materials may be presented ahead of the time indicated below.

Semester Prior to Graduation

Fall Semester	Spring Semester	
3rd wk in Oct.	3rd wk in March	You must enroll in FCS696C. If you wish approval of your proposal for graduation next semester, it must be presented to your advisor and committee by this date. The proposal should include chapters 1-3. Note: some advisors require that a first draft be submitted to them only before circulating it to the full committee.

Semester of Graduation		
Fall Semester	Spring Semester	
1 st wk in Sept.	1 st wk in Feb.	Notify your advisor if you plan to complete your thesis/project this semester. Enroll in FCS698C.
2 nd wk in Oct.	3 rd wk in March	A first draft of the thesis (Chapters 1-5) should be given to your advisor and committee members. There should be considerable consultation and work with your advisor prior to the circulation of this draft. Note: Some advisors require a first draft to be submitted to them before circulation to the full committee. It will be returned to you for correction. Then the corrected draft will be circulated to the whole committee. Plan accordingly.
Last wk in Oct.	1 st wk in April	Circulate second draft of thesis to committee. Schedule oral defense.
2 nd wk in Nov.	3 rd wk in April	Oral Defense. Schedule an appointment with the University Thesis Advisor to review final thesis.
1 st wk in Dec.	2 nd wk in May	Final thesis copy with multiple signature pages must be ready for final approval. Meet with University Thesis Advisor.

Note: Finishing your thesis/project during the summer session is not usually allowed since most faculty members are not employed during the summer. If you have a compelling reason for taking your orals and or completing the final thesis/project in the summer, you must discuss this with your advisor, the Graduate Coordinator and the Department Chair. Faculty, however, are under no obligation to agree to assist you during the summer.

Important Dates for the Comprehensive Examination

Semester of Graduation		
Fall Semester	Spring Semester	
2 nd wk in Sept.	2 nd wk in Feb.	You must enroll in FCS 697C by this time. Notify your advisor if you plan to take the comprehensive

		examination this semester. (Note: By the 4 th week of the semester, you must have selected an advisor and committee. This is required before you can register for FCS 697C.)
3 rd wk in Sept.	3 rd wk in Feb.	Your advisor must notify the Department Chair and the FCS Department Graduate Committee that you will take the exam.
2 nd wk in Oct.	1 st wk in March	You must arrange your meeting with your committee by the sixth week to turn in your student portfolio. The Graduate Coordinator will notify you of the exact date, time and place to pick up your exam questions.
1-4 weeks before finals week or during finals week	1-4 weeks before finals week or during finals week	Take written comprehensive examination. Oral defense of your written exams and notification of whether you passed the exams. The results will be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research & International Programs.

Note: The comprehensive exam is not given during the summer or intersession.

Thesis Policies and Guidelines

If you have selected the thesis as your culminating experience, there are some policies and guidelines that the department has established to help you through the process. Generally, you will earn 3-6 units for the thesis; these are included in your 30-unit program.

1. You need to select a thesis chair. Generally, this person will be your major advisor who approves your program. However you may change your major advisor.
2. The second committee member will be selected by you and your thesis chair. This person needs to be a faculty member with a doctorate or equivalency to the doctorate in your area of specialization. Together, your thesis chair and the second member will select the third member on your committee who should have a doctorate or equivalency. This person should be outside your area of specialization, or outside the FCS department, or be an off-campus professional.
3. Obtain a copy of Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses, Graduate Programs and Artistic Abstracts from the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs. Read it thoroughly.

4. You must submit the title of your thesis as well as the names of your committee members to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs through the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation website at <http://etd.csun.edu>.
5. After getting approval from your thesis chair on your topic, enroll in FCS 696C (Directed Graduate Research) for 3 units. You will earn 3 units for the development of your proposal. You will need to get a permission number from your thesis chair. You are responsible for meeting the department deadlines. See the section titled Important Dates on Thesis/Project.
6. While working on your proposal it is necessary to submit a first draft (Chapters 1, 2 & 3) to your thesis chair. The chair will read, edit, and request changes. You will prepare a corrected draft, based on your chair's recommendations, and then submit this version to all three members of your thesis committee, including your chair, for their approval. After the committee has read and edited the draft there may be additional changes requested. These changes will be incorporated into your thesis. Before you begin your data collection, you should meet with the entire thesis committee in order to discuss your research methodology.
7. Your committee must approve your thesis research after they have read your proposal and before you proceed on your research.
8. If your research involves human subjects, you must obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) office who is Standing Advisory Committee on campus for the Protection of Human Subjects. You must not begin your data collection or analysis until you have received written approval by this committee to do so. The letter of approval will need to be included in an appendix of your thesis. The "Human Subjects Protocol Approval" form necessary for approval is available in the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs. This committee meets only once a month and not at all during the summer. Plan for a one to two month turn-around time on your request.
9. If your research involves animal subjects, you must obtain the necessary approval from the Institutional Animal and Use Committee (IACUC). In order for any use of animals to be approved the IACUC must receive complete and convincing evidence that such is consistent with the mission of the University, the principles and practices of the CSUN *Guide for Facilities and Care of Animals Used in Research and Teaching*, the specifications of the NIH *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, and the highest applicable medical and humane standards. You must not begin your data collection until you have received written approval by this committee to do so. The letter of approval will need to be included in an appendix of your thesis. The "Animal Subjects Approval Form" is available in the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects. Completed forms must be submitted ten (10) working days prior to the next scheduled IACUC meeting. The IACUC will communicate its response to applicant not later than

ten (10) working days after each meeting. Plan for a one to two month turn-around time on your request.

10. It is unlikely that you will begin and finish a thesis in one semester, so the university allows for a special grade of Report in Progress (RP) to be assigned until the thesis is completed and it has received university approval. The RP grade for FCS 696C will be converted to a traditional letter grade when you finish your thesis. The specific grade is determined by your committee. Note: There is a four-semester limit on RP grades; that is, you have two years to complete the thesis from start to finish.
11. Under the direction of your thesis committee you will carry out your research, collecting and analyzing the data and writing the thesis. For this portion of the thesis work you enroll in FCS 698C (Thesis) for 3 units. You will need to get a permission number from your thesis chair, as you did for FCS 696C. You are responsible for meeting department and university deadlines. See the section titled Important Dates for Thesis/Project. You will receive an RP grade until your thesis is completed.
12. When you have completed your data analysis, rewritten Chapters 1 - 3 to meet the specification of your thesis committee (#5 above), and written Chapters 4 & 5, you will submit the first draft of the thesis to your thesis/project chair (who will read, edit and request changes). After modifying the thesis to meet these specifications, you will submit a second draft to all three members of your thesis committee, including your thesis/project chair, for their approval.
13. If you have not finished your thesis by the end of the semester in which you are enrolled in FCS 698, you will again need to enroll in FCS 696C (3 units) for every semester until you finish the thesis. When you re-enroll in FCS 696C in order to finish your thesis you should register for it under CR/NC grading basis. Remember, you must be enrolled in the university during the semester in which you complete the thesis and graduate. Subsequent enrollment in FCS 696C is the way in which the FCS department allows for you to meet the requirement.
14. The committee needs to have your second draft at least 2 weeks before your oral defense. You are responsible for contacting members of your committee to find a mutually agreeable date and time for your oral. The oral defense normally requires 1 1/2 to 2 hours, so schedule accordingly. Your thesis chair will arrange for the room for the oral defense.
15. The oral examination is attended by you and your thesis committee. You will be asked to briefly summarize your research. You should also be prepared to answer questions on the purpose and design of your research, the strengths and weaknesses of the methodology, the analysis, and the implications of your findings. Your thesis chair will advise you on how to prepare for the oral defense.

16. Once your committee has approved of the final copy of your thesis they will sign the signature page which you will need to take to the Office of Graduate Studies before the final submission deadline.
17. During the oral defense, your committee will request additional changes to be made in the final thesis. These must be made before the thesis is approved and the signature pages are signed by your committee. Your thesis chair will review your final copy. Allow adequate time (at least 2 weeks) to make changes between your oral defense and the deadline for delivering your final copy of the thesis to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs.
19. It is recommended that you take your second draft to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs for a preliminary review by the university thesis advisor. This will eliminate any last minute changes in format, margins, page numbering, etc. You will need to return to see the university thesis advisor after your oral and take the final thesis (on the correct type of paper) for the final approval (see #3 above).
20. After you receive final approval of the thesis by the university thesis advisor in the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs, you must submit the final copy through <http://etd.csun.edu>. You are not required to print or bind your thesis but you might wish to do so for your own records. Information on recommended places for binding is available at <http://grip/graduatestudies/thesis>. You must pay for the copying and binding of your thesis.
21. Congratulations! You've made it!

Project Policies and Guidelines

If you have selected the project as your culminating experience, there are some policies and guidelines that the department has established to help you through the process. Generally, you will earn 3-6 units for the project; these are included in your 30-unit program.

1. You need to select a project chair. This person will be your major advisor who approved your program. However you may change your major advisor.
2. The second committee member will be selected by you and your project chair. This person needs to be a faculty member with a doctorate or equivalency to the doctorate in your area of specialization. Together, your project chair and the second member will select the third member of your committee who should have a doctorate or equivalency. This person should be outside your area of specialization, or outside the FCS department, or be an off-campus professional.
3. Obtain a copy of *Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses, Graduate Programs and Artistic Abstracts* from the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs. Read it thoroughly.
4. After getting approval from your project chair on your topic, enroll in FCS 696C (Directed Graduate Research) for 3 units. You will earn 3 units credit for the development of your proposal. You will need to get a permission number from your project chair. It is expected that during this semester you will present a polished proposal to your committee. You are responsible for meeting the department deadlines. See the section titled Important Dates for Thesis/Project. You must submit the title of your project as well as the names of your committee members to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs through the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation website at <http://etd.csun.edu>
5. While working on your proposal it is necessary to submit a first draft (Chapters 1, 2, & 3) to your project chair. The chair will read, edit, and request changes. You will prepare a corrected draft, based on your chair's recommendations, and then submit this version to all three members of your project committee (who will read, edit, and request changes) for their approval. These changes will be incorporated into your project.
6. Your committee must approve your project research after they have read your proposal and before you fully develop your project. This is done on the "Thesis/Graduate Project Planning Form," which can be obtained in the FCS Department Office.
7. If your research project involves human subjects, you must obtain approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB) office who is Standing Advisory Committee on

campus for the Protection of Human Subjects. You must not begin your data collection until you have received written approval by this committee to do so. The letter of approval will need to be included in an appendix of your project report. The “Human Subjects Protocol Approval” form necessary for approval is available in the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs. This committee meets only once a month and not at all during the summer. Plan for a one to two month turn around time on your request.

8. If your research involves animal subjects, you must obtain the necessary approval from the Institutional Animal and Use Committee (IACUC). In order for any use of animals to be approved the IACUC must receive complete and convincing evidence that such is consistent with the mission of the University, the principles and practices of the CSUN *Guide for Facilities and Care of Animals Used in Research and Teaching*, the specifications of the NIH *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, and the highest applicable medical and humane standards. You must not begin your data collection until you have received written approval by this committee to do so. The letter of approval will need to be included in an appendix of your thesis. The “Animal Subjects Approval” form is available in the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects. Completed forms must be submitted ten (10) working days prior to the next scheduled IACUC meeting. The IACUC will communicate its response to applicant not later than ten (10) working days after each meeting. Plan for a one to two month turn-around time on your request.
9. It is unlikely that you will begin and finish a project in one semester, so the university allows for a special grade of Report in Progress (RP) to be assigned until the project is completed and has received university approval. The RP grade for FCS 696C will be converted to a traditional letter grade when you finish your project. The specific grade is determined by your committee. Note: There is a two-year limit on RP grades; that is, you have two years to complete the project from start to finish.
10. Under the direction of your project committee you will develop your project product. For this portion of the project you will enroll in FCS 698C (Thesis/Project) for 3 units. You will need to get a permission number from your project chair. You are responsible for meeting department and university deadlines. See section titled Important Dates for Thesis/Project. You will receive an RP grade until you complete your project.
11. Before you begin the evaluation phase of your project you must submit the project product for evaluation to your project committee. Do not proceed to the evaluation phase without your project committee reading, editing, and approving the product before you send it to the panel of experts (or whoever your evaluation panel is) to evaluate. This extra step will assure that your project committee is fully informed of your actions. Failure to have the project committee preview your project product may result in modifying the project and redoing the evaluation phase. It may be

desirable to meet with the entire project committee in order to discuss your project product before moving to the evaluation phase.

12. When you have completed your project evaluation phase, rewritten Chapters 1-3 to meet the specification of your project committee, and written Chapters 4 and 5, you will submit the first draft of the project to your project chair who will read, edit, and request changes. After modifying the project to meet these specifications, you will submit a second draft to all members of your project committee, including your project chair.
13. If you have not finished your project by the end of the semester in which you are enrolled in FCS 698C, you will again need to enroll in FCS 696C (3 units) for every semester until you finish the project. When you re-enroll in FCS 696C in order to finish your project you should register for it under CR/NC grading basis. Remember, you must be enrolled in the university during the semester in which you complete the project and graduate. The subsequent enrollment in FCS 696C is the way in which the FCS department allows for you to meet the requirement.
14. The committee needs to have your second draft at least 2 weeks before your oral defense. You are responsible for contacting members of your committee to find a mutually agreeable date and time for your oral. This will require a number of phone calls, so allow time over several days to do this. The oral defense normally requires 1 ½ to 2 hours, so schedule accordingly. Your project chair will arrange for the room for the oral defense.
15. The oral examination is attended by you and your project committee. You will be asked to briefly summarize your project. You should also be prepared to answer questions on the purpose and design of the project, the strengths and weaknesses of the product, and the implications of your project to the field. Your project chair will advise you on how to prepare for the oral.
16. During the oral, your committee may request additional changes to be made in the final project. These must be made before the project is approved and the signature pages are signed by your committee. Your thesis/project chair will review your final copy. Allow adequate time (at least 2 weeks) to make changes between your oral defense and the deadline for delivering your final copy to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs.
17. It is recommended that you take your second draft to the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs for a preliminary review by the university thesis advisor. This will eliminate any last minute changes in format, margins, page numbering, etc. You will need to return to see the university thesis advisor after your oral to take the final project (on correct paper) for the final approval.

18. After you receive final approval of the project by the university thesis/project advisor in the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs, you must submit the final copy through <http://etd.csun.edu>. You are not required to print or bind your project but you might wish to do so for your own records. Information on recommended places for binding is available at <http://grip/graduatestudies/thesis>. You must pay for the copying and binding of your project.
19. Congratulations! You've made it!

Comprehensive Examination Policies and Guidelines

If you have selected the comprehensive examination as your culminating experience there are some policies and guidelines that the department has established to help you through the process.

1. If you elect to take the comprehensive examination you will need to take 33 units of coursework on your program, 24 units of courses from your area of specialization; 6 units of FCS 681 and 682, and 3 units for FCS 697C. This means you will probably be taking 2 more courses than students who select the thesis/project option since they receive 3-6 units for their thesis/project.

Now here is the tricky part. You must sign up for FCS 697C for 3 units, but you do not get 3 units of university course credit for taking the exam. On your program form this appears as "30 (33)" units.

2. You must complete all the requirements for the degree before or during the semester in which you take the exam.
3. You must enroll in FCS 697C for 3 units during the semester in which you are taking the exam. You will need to get a permission number from your comprehensive exam committee chair.
4. During the first week of the semester you must notify all members of your Comprehensive exam committee that you are taking the exam that semester. The Comprehensive exam committee chair will in turn, notify the chair of the FCS Department Graduate Committee.
5. Shortly after enrolling in FCS 697C, you will be notified by letter of the date of the examination which will take place during the 1-2 weeks prior to finals week.
6. Questions for the examination will be selected by your Comprehensive Exam committee. You will be given six essay questions which may require you to expound

on theories, cite and review a body of research, and or solve a clinical problem. You will be given one calendar week to complete your exam.

7. The questions will be essay type questions. Questions will reflect the content of all of the classes taken, including seminars, independent studies, and out-of area/department courses. However, there may not be a specific question devoted to each class you have taken. In addition, any one question may reflect the content of more than one course.
8. You must attain a minimum score of 18 points out of a total of 24 points (4 points possible per question) for a passing grade on the examination. If you score fewer than 18 points, the whole exam must be taken again at the next scheduled date. This date will be near the end of the next semester. If you score fewer than 3 points on any individual question, you must retake that part of the exam at the next scheduled date. This is true regardless of the overall point score.
9. Your Comp exam committee will make a recommendation of pass or fail to the FCS Department, which will inform you in writing of the outcome of the examination. You should expect a letter informing you of their decision 2-3 weeks after you have taken the exam.
10. In the event of failure you have one more opportunity to pass the part or parts of the exam failed. Once the exam is attempted, you may not change to another form of culminating experience.
11. After failing, in rare cases, the student might want to challenge one or more questions of the Comprehensive exam. First, this complaint or challenge should be directed to the Comprehensive exam committee chair, and all Comprehensive exam members are required to review the answer/answers of the complainant. At last, if Comprehensive exam committee members had some disagreement on passing or failing the student for one/more questions, depending on Comprehensive exam committee's final decision, step two might be going to the Department Graduate Committee. The Department Graduate Committee should be contacted by the Comprehensive exam committee chair to review one/more questions of the comprehensive exam for the last time. The final decision will be mailed to the student.

Organizations and Activities

Student and Professional Organizations

The FCS faculty feels it is very important to your personal and professional development for you to belong to, and actively participate in, student and professional organizations. Such organizations allow you to develop leadership and management skills, network, and keep abreast of new developments in the field.

Student Organizations

The FCS Department publishes a brochure on the student organizations officially associated with the department. (It is available in the FCS Department Office.) The faculty encourages you to become active in SAFCS the Student Association of Family and Consumer Sciences; this is the umbrella organization for the FCS Department and is open to all our majors. FCSCC allows you to network with students from other areas/options and facilitates a cross-fertilization of ideas in our field and thus builds your collaboration skills.

The FCS student organizations are as follows

- ◆ **Student Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (SAFCS).** Open to all students majoring in FCS.
- ◆ **Student Dietetic and Food Science Association (SDFSA).** Specialized for those with an interest in dietetics, food science, and related fields.
- ◆ **Trends.** Specialized for those with an interest in fashion, merchandising and design, apparel development and production, and textiles sciences.
- ◆ **Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals (SoCAP).** Open to all students with an interest in consumer resource management.
- ◆ **American Society of Interior Designers (ASID).** Open to all students who have an interest in interior design.
- ◆ **Kappa Omicron Nu Honor Society (KON).** National honor society of family and consumer sciences professionals. Membership is by invitation. (If invited, you are most strenuously encouraged to join this group of scholars.)

Professional Organizations

Family and Consumer Sciences is a diverse field of study focusing on the various needs of individuals and families. Because of the broad nature of our profession, we belong to many different organizations that address the needs and contribute to the support of individuals and families. Below are listed some of the professional organizations (listed by specialization) that FCS faculty recommend you consider joining. Many of these organizations have state and local affiliates.

As a graduate student, we realize that you may not be able to join as many organizations as you would like. However, keep in mind that many organizations have reduced membership fees for students and often you receive journals published by the organization. Ask your professors for advice when selecting organizations to join.

After graduation you will be expected, as a fellow professional, to join and take leadership roles in at least one professional organization associated with your area of specialization. In addition, we feel you should maintain membership and participate in the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS). AAFCS is a professional organization for individuals who have graduated with Degrees in Family and Consumer Sciences and are practicing professionals in the field.

General

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS)
International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE)

Consumer Resource Management

American Association of Consumer Interest (ACCI)
Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education (AFCPE)
Association for Public Policy and Management (APPAM)
Population Association of America (PAA)
Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals (SOCAP)

Family Relations and Child Development

American Psychological Association (APA)
American Sociological Association (ASA)
Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI)
International Council of Sex Education and Parenthood
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
National Council on Family Relations (NCFR)
Society for Research in Child Development (SCRD)
The Society for the Scientific Study of Sex

Education

American Vocational Association
Home Economics Teachers Association of California

National Association for Teacher Education for Vocational Home Economics

Housing and Interior Design

American Planning Association
American Society of Interior Design (ASID)
Designers Lighting Forum (DLF)
Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA)
Housing Education and Research Association (HERA)
International Interior Design Association (IIDA)
Interior Design Educators Council (IDEC)
International Society of Interior Design (ISID)
International Furnishing and Design Association (IFDA)

Apparel, Textiles and Merchandising

American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists
International Textile and Apparel Association (ITAA)
Fashion Group International, Inc.
The Costume Society of America
Fashion Business, Inc.

Food and Nutrition

American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Council on Science and Health
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
American Institute of Chemists
American Institute of Nutrition
American Chemical Society
California Nutrition Council
Consulting Nutritionists of Southern California
Foodservice Systems Management Education Council
Greater Los Angeles Nutrition Council
Institute of Food Technologists
National Council Against Health Fraud
Nutrition Today Society
Southern California Institute of Food Technologists
American Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN)

Other Related

American Educational Research Association (AERA)
New York Academy of Sciences
Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society
Royal Society for the Promotion of Health
Sigma Xi Society

Student and Professional Activities

KON Research Night

Kappa Omicron Nu (KON) Honor Society is a national organization for scholars in Family and Consumer Sciences. Besides publishing the *KON Forum*, the organization sponsors a number of programs such as the yearly conclave--a national meeting open to all members.

At CSUN, our KON chapter holds meetings each semester and hosts the Kappa Omicron Nu Research Night each spring. At Research Night, students and faculty are invited to present their research to their peers. Students selecting the thesis/project or culminating experience are encouraged to participate. This experience will give you an opportunity to disseminate your research findings to a wider audience than your thesis/project committee, practice your presentation skills in front of a friendly audience, and add experience to your professional resume.

Professional Presentations

When you have completed your thesis/project, the FCS faculty would like to encourage you to present your findings at professional meetings. Your presentations could be at the national, state, or local levels. Most organizations have professional meetings at least once a year. In order to be considered for the presenting, you will need to submit an abstract of your research project. The due dates are usually announced many months in advance through the organization's publications. Your thesis/project chair should help guide you to the appropriate organizations for your research and help keep you informed as to due dates. The presentations can vary greatly, ranging from being the primary speaker for an hour-long session in a formal presentation, to being a member of a panel, to doing a poster session where you present your findings in visual format.

Each kind of presentation can provide you with valuable professional experience. They can facilitate your networking activities, help disseminate your findings to others in the field, help develop your presentation skills, and add experience to your resume.

Publications

After you have finished your thesis/project and graduated, you may want to consider publishing your research. Publishing your work will insure that it attains the recognition it deserves and that you make a contribution to the body of literature in our field. For some research programs, professional journals or trade publications will be an appropriate format for disseminating your findings. Each of these publications has a different focus and your

thesis/project chair will need to guide you to the appropriate publications for which to submit your article. With articles submitted to journals it is customary to have your thesis/project chair co-author the article, with your chair listed as second author.

For other research programs, publications other than journals and trade magazines may be more appropriate. For instance, if your research project has resulted in a guide, manual, book, etc. a freestanding publication may be a good choice. While publishing is a highly competitive field, we do encourage you to investigate the various avenues available to you for dissemination of your work.

Financial Resources

Many students are interested in obtaining some financial assistance to help with the costs of their education. The following should give you some financial resources to consider accessing.

Financial Aid

Graduate students can obtain a number of types of financial aid. Some types require that the individual demonstrate a financial need, while other types are obtainable regardless of income. Graduate students may receive loans or Federal Work-Study, but not Federal Pell grants or Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity grants (FSEOG). For a full explanation of eligibility requirements, you can obtain a copy of *The Student Guide: Financial Aid for the U.S. Department of Education* at the CSUN Financial Aid office. You may also consult with a financial aid counselor in this office.

Applications for financial aid are accepted only at certain times of the year. You should obtain the dates from the Financial Aid Office. All needed documents must be submitted by April 15. If you miss the application deadline you still might consider applying because you might receive partial funding. You must reapply for financial aid each year in order to be considered.

Graduate students are considered independent and, therefore, you need report only your own income and assets (and those of a spouse). Also, graduate students must be enrolled in at least 8 units each semester in order to be eligible.

Graduate students qualify for the following types of aid:

- ◆ Federal Work-Study: allows you to work at specified places (on and off campus) and earn money to help pay for your education.
- ◆ Federal Perkins Loan: a low interest loan helps you to pay for your education.
- ◆ Federal Stafford Loan: low interest loan made to students attending the university at least halftime.
- ◆ State University Loan: low interest loan given through the university.

Scholarships

Information on department scholarships is posted on the FCS website.

Information on other scholarships that pertain to FCS students is kept in the FCS Department Office in the scholarship drawer. Each scholarship, filed by the name of the scholarship, has information on eligibility requirements, due dates, applications, forms, brochures, etc.

These scholarships are usually sponsored by professional organizations at the national, state, district and/or local levels. For example, the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences offers graduate scholarships and fellowships as does the California association, the Los Angeles chapter, the Channel Islands chapter, the Westside chapter, etc. It is perfectly acceptable to apply for scholarships at all levels as doing so may increase your chances of receiving funding.

Some of the scholarships listed in the file are open to any major (e.g. Danforth). However, most are limited to our field of study; some are open to all FCS options/areas of specializations (e.g. AAFCS and Kappa Omicron Nu), while others are open only to those in certain specialties (eg. Heinz is for students specializing in food science/nutrition and Ruth Lencione is for students specializing in family studies). Check the eligibility requirements carefully for area of specialization, class level, place of residence, etc.

Check on the current website and listing in the FCS office to determine the most up-to-date list. Listed below are some scholarships to consider:

All areas of specializations

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Fellowship
California Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Fellowship
Kappa Omicron Nu Scholarship
Marjory Joseph Scholarship

Family Studies

Dubnoff Lecture Award
Milt Akers Education Award (CAEYC)
Ruth Lencione Fellowship

Consumer Resource Management

Electrical Women's Round Table Fellowship
Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals Scholarship

Foods and Nutrition

American Dietetics Association Scholarship

Food and Agricultural Sciences
H.J. Heinz Graduate Degree Fellowship
National Needs Graduate Fellowship
Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Society Scholarship
Marilyn Magaram Center Graduate Fellowship (FCS/CSUN)
AAFCS Annie McDonald Lindsey Graduate Fellowship

Interior Design

International Society of Interior Designers Scholarship (ISID)
International Interior Design Association (IIDA)
Maybelle Wilhelmintar Boldt Memorial Scholarship (ASID)

Textiles and Apparel

The Fashion Group Rudi Gernreich Memorial Scholarship

In addition to the scholarship files in the FCS Department Office, you should consult with the CSUN Scholarship Office. The staff will direct you to other scholarships for which you meet the eligibility requirements.

The Scholarship Office is located in the Financial Aid Office in the Matador Bookstore Complex.

Assistantships

The FCS Department offers a limited number of paid graduate assistantships. Graduate assistants are mentored by the professors they assist and have a variety of duties including assisting professors with grading, proctoring exams, giving guest lectures, teaching laboratories, occasionally teaching undergraduate courses, or assisting in research. One of the positions at the Child Development and Family Relations Laboratory as head teacher is reserved for a graduate student.

If you are interested in the assistantship experience, you need to submit a letter of interest to the Department Chair and file an application. Assistantships are one semester in duration, with the possibility of extensions contingent upon department budgetary constraints and satisfactory evaluations of the assistant's work. Contact the Department Chair for more information.

Other Resources

Summarized below are other financial resources available to graduate students.

Graduate Student Thesis/Project/Performance Award

Awards are given to support the costs associated with the thesis/project such as supplies and equipment, typing and copying, and travel to collect data, etc. Maximum award amounts

vary each year, but generally are about \$1,000. Applications must be made at the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs.

Student Programs Grants

Funds are awarded on a competitive basis to support Programs designed and implemented by students, particularly thesis research and Programs with a community service aspect. Students applying for the grants must have a faculty sponsor (usually your thesis/project chair).

Amounts vary each year. Applications are due November 15 (approximately) of each year. Applications are available in the executive offices of the University Corporation (formerly the Foundation) located on the second floor of the Matador Bookstore complex.

Community College Internships

Occasionally there are funds available to place graduate students from historically underrepresented groups (ethnic minorities, females in science/engineering, disabled) at local community colleges where they are mentored by a professor in their field. Stipend amounts vary. See the Graduate Coordinator for more information.

Graduate Equity Fellowship Program

Financial assistance to underrepresented graduate students (ethnic minorities and students with disabilities) is available on a competitive basis. Students are paired with a faculty mentor in their field of study. Amounts vary up to \$4,000 per year. Recipients may apply for up to four semesters of support. Applicants must submit a Federal Student Aid form. Applications are due in early August and can be obtained in the Office of Graduate Studies, Research and International Programs. See the Graduate Coordinator for more information.

The Jesse Marvin Unruh Assembly Fellowship Program and California Senate Associates Program

A program for those interested in public policy is open to all majors. Requires 11 months internship in Sacramento while earning 12 units of graduate coursework (9 of which will count toward the MS Degree). Monthly stipend of \$1,500 and benefits. Unruh applications due between October and March; Senate applications due in mid February. See FCS Department scholarship files for more information.

California State University Northridge Research Competition

Graduate students working on these or projects can apply for California State University Northridge Research Competition. The winners of this competition will be selected to represent CSUN at statewide CSU competition. For more detail information check with Graduate Studies.

FCS Department Funds

On rare occasions, the FCS Department will assist students doing thesis research to purchase equipment for that research. Such equipment belongs to the university and is required to fit the equipment needs of the department at that point in time. See your thesis/project chair concerning this matter.

Career Center

Placement section offers referrals to part-time jobs with local businesses and private and government agencies.

Departmental Governance of Graduate Studies

This section presents general information on the governance structure of the graduate program in the FCS Department.

The FCS Department Graduate Committee

The purpose of the Graduate Program Committee is to develop policies and implement procedure relative to the graduate program. The committee consists of three faculty members, elected to serve three-year terms, plus the Graduate Coordinator, who serves as an ex-officio member. The duties and responsibilities of the committee are:

1. To develop and recommend policies for faculty consideration concerning the graduate program such as those for admission, thesis/project, comprehensive exam, course requirements.
2. To carry out a periodic review of the graduate program.
3. To encourage and develop strategies to promote academic and professional development among graduate students.
4. To identify and encourage necessary curriculum changes to improve the quality of the program.
5. To assist the Graduate Coordinator when necessary.
6. To facilitate communication between the faculty and any other university offices concerned with graduate studies.

7. To assume responsibility for grading the comprehensive exam in the event of a disagreement concerning the score assigned by the student's graduate program committee and the faculty teaching the course from which the questions came.

The FCS Graduate Coordinator

The FCS Graduate Coordinator is a faculty member appointed by the Department Chair to direct and oversee the graduate program.

The coordinator's responsibilities are to:

1. Coordinate implementation of departmental and university policies related to graduate students.
2. Act as a contact point for prospective students.
3. Interview and advise all new incoming graduate students.
4. Advise all graduate students on the process for becoming classified, checking on conditions, and filing forms.
5. Review and approve all programs submitted by students.
6. Coordinate the comprehensive exam.
7. Visit graduate classes when requested to do so.
8. Contact and advise students on probation.
9. Receive suggestions from students and faculty on improving the graduate program.
10. Update graduate program recruiting and advising materials.
11. Take leadership role in new development for the graduate program.

**AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA) FORMAT (6th Edition)*
(Check the Oviatt Library website for further assistance on APA formatting.)**

Attachment

FCS Steps to Graduate

Instructions for applying for classification

What Are the Steps to Graduate?



Classification:

Students must be classified within their first 12 units of graduate coursework. There are University as well as departmental requirements for classification; please see the Graduate Student Information Booklet and your graduate coordinator for more information.

Formal Program:

Once classified, a student may submit the Formal Program. This is a department specific form that lists all of the classes that are required for the Master's degree. This form must be approved by an advisor, the department Graduate Coordinator, and Graduate Evaluations.

Application for Graduation (form available online):

Students should apply for graduation the semester before they plan to graduate. The application and \$47 fee should be submitted to Admissions and Records (located in the lobby of Bayramian Hall). There is no deadline for applying; however, the later you submit the form, the later your Graduate Evaluator will be able to send you a Master's Degree Graduation Evaluation. This form tells you what requirements you still need to complete, or what paperwork you must turn in for your file.

Project Planning Form:

Students who are not taking a Comprehensive Exam must file a Project Planning Form. There is no deadline for this form but it must be filed before the student has their preliminary format check.

Thesis Experience:

Students who have already enrolled in the 698 (thesis/project) and were given a grade of "RP," but still require an additional semester to continue working on their thesis or graduate project, may enroll in the Culminating Experience with department approval. This form allows the student to remain enrolled in the University and provides library privileges, but not health center services, and has no unit value. The fee is \$265 and is paid to the College of Extended Learning. In order to enroll, a student must have: applied for graduation (or, if previously applied for graduation, file a date change form with Admissions and Records, \$8 fee); classified standing, and filed a formal program with the Graduate Studies Office. Enrollment is required in the semester the degree is awarded.

Check List:

_____ Classified Standing

_____ Formal Program

_____ Application for Graduation

_____ Project Planning Form

****A note on commencement: Participation in the ceremony does not confer a degree.***



Instructions for applying for classification:

Unclassified Students that have not exceeded 12 Unit of Completed Course Work

- Step one:** Fill out the “*Request for Classification Form*” which is located in SQ 141 or in the Graduate Studies Office University Hall 265.
- Step Two:** For each requirement met on the Request of Classification form, you need to indicate the date of completion on the right side of the form.
- Step Three:** In addition to the form please include a copy of your unofficial transcript and highlight the dates of completion for each condition that has been awarded (example *UDW, prerequisite courses, or B.S. diploma.*)
- If one of your conditions was the GRE you must include a copy of your GRE scores indicating your passing test results.
- Step Four:** Drop off your form and additional documentation to main office in SQ 141, to the attention of Dr. Fajardo-Lira, Graduate Coordinator.
- Don’t forget to sign and date the form upon submission to the FCS office.

Unclassified Students that have exceeded 12 Unit of Completed Course Work

If you have completed more than 12 units of graduate course work please schedule an appointment with Dr. Fajardo-Lira via email (claudia.fajardo@csun.edu). Upon your appointment please make sure to bring the following things:

- Your academic file
- A completed Request for Classification Form (available in SQ 141):
 - For each requirement met on the Request of Classification form, you need to indicate the date of completion on the right side of the form.
- If one of your conditions was the GRE you must include a copy of your GRE scores indicating your passing test results.
- A completed Graduate Petition form (also available in SQ 141) in which you will check the box that says **12 units** and write a justification as to why you hadn’t filed sooner.

- A copy of your unofficial transcript and highlight the dates in which any conditions were completed (example: UDWE, prerequisite courses, B.S. diploma awarded, when you completed FCS499A or 690M).

After review by the graduate coordinator your paperwork will be signed and forwarded to the Graduate Studies office; there is a 3 to 4 weeks waiting period before your files are updated.