Mathematics

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Academic Programs

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The Mathematics Department offers a complete undergraduate program of courses leading to a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics. It also offers a program of courses for students who wish to minor in mathematics, as well as graduate courses for programs of study leading to a Master of Science degree. The mix of pure and applied mathematics in these courses increases both the usefulness of and the demand for graduates with a degree in mathematics. In addition, the Mathematics Department offers courses that serve all departments in the university.

The rich variety of courses available in the department permits the student not only to obtain a broad exposure to those fields of mathematics which are most useful in the physical sciences and engineering, but also to obtain experience with the mathematics that is used in business, management sciences, and operations research.

Satisfactory completion of the Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) requirement is a prerequisite for enrollment in all mathematics courses except MATH 100 and MATH 104. For additional mathematics placement (MAPE) information visit the Academic Standards and Policies (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/academicstandardsandpolicies/academicplacement) section.

Undergraduate Programs

BS Mathematics

The undergraduate program for math majors contains a central core of courses. These courses give a solid basis for advanced work that is tailored to fit the needs and objectives of each individual student. Advanced coursework is chosen in close consultation with faculty advisors.

Concentrations

The General Curriculum in Mathematics is not a concentration, and is the default curriculum required for students who do not declare a concentration. The general curriculum and all of the concentrations provide a strong mathematical foundation for the student contemplating the pursuit of an advanced degree in mathematics.

Applied Mathematics

Provides a curriculum with an emphasis on application to the physical sciences and engineering. This concentration benefits students who are interested in the use of mathematics within areas such as engineering, computer science, physics, aeronautics, astronomy, and the geosciences. Potential career paths include pursuit of advanced degrees in any of the above fields or in applied mathematics, as well as industrial jobs where physical processes are modeled by ordinary and partial differential equations.

Pure Mathematics

A broad and rigorous curriculum designed both for students who will pursue an advanced degree in mathematics as well as those who choose careers requiring significant mathematical training. Graduates of the program are well prepared to enter graduate programs in mathematics and capable of bringing a broad range of mathematical skills and expertise to a wide range of professional careers.

Mathematics Teaching

Students wishing to prepare for a career teaching mathematics in middle or senior high school should choose the concentration in teaching. The courses in the concentration, coupled with the other required courses in the major, fulfill the prerequisites for the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Mathematics Minor

Students may earn a minor in mathematics by completing a coordinated course of study. The program consists of a core of required courses, followed by two tracks of advanced work, to be chosen in concert with a student's career objectives. Interested students should contact the Mathematics Department for individual advisement.

Graduate Program

Master of Science Degree in Mathematics

General Characteristics

The master of science program in mathematics prepares students to enter careers in government, industry or teaching. A student who completes the degree is qualified and eligible to teach at the community college level. Many of the graduates of the program also pursue further graduate study at Ph.D.-granting institutions.

Prerequisites

Prerequisite to entering the program with a classified or conditionally classified status, the student must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 in the last 90 quarter units attempted. Applicants with majors in other areas or applicants with deficiencies in their undergraduate background may be admitted conditionally. For information concerning additional requirements, the student should contact the Graduate Coordinator in the Mathematics Department.

Advancement to candidacy requires completion of 12 units of an approved study plan with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and satisfactory completion of the preliminary examinations in analysis and algebra.

Blended BS+MS Mathematics

The blended program provides motivated students with an efficient way to complete a BS and MS in mathematics with both degrees being conferred simultaneously. Students are provided with ample advising to ensure a seamless transition from undergraduate to graduate status.

Eligibility

Students majoring in mathematics may apply for the blended program as early as their junior year after completing at least two upper-division mathematics classes and before they have completed 180 units. The Graduate Committee evaluates each
applicant individually. Acceptance into the program is based on prior academic performance and the applicant’s promise to successfully complete the master’s program. See General Policies Governing Graduate Studies (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/graduateeducation/#generalpoliciesgoverninggraduatestudiestext) for additional eligibility criteria.

**Program of Study**

Students must complete the requirements of both the undergraduate and master’s program of study for a total of 225 units. However, they are advised to take the undergraduate courses most suitable as preparation for the master’s program. They should take the graduate preliminary written examinations at the time they complete the appropriate courses, even possibly before they have graduate status. Finally, the senior project, if sufficiently complex, may be extended into a graduate thesis. This last option is particularly attractive to students participating in one of the many undergraduate summer research programs available at either Cal Poly or other universities, since the research can then be used as a basis for the senior project and master’s thesis.