CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH
SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY, CRIMINAL JUSTICE, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



M.S. in Emergency Services Administration Graduate Student Handbook

Note: The content of this handbook does not constitute, nor should it be construed as a contract between any graduate student and the University, the College of Health and Human Services, the College of Professional & Continuing Education, or the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management. The School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management, at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue parts or the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice subject to the limitations of any formal academic policy enacted by CSULB.

Dear Student,

Welcome to the Master of Science Program in Emergency Services Administration. We are excited that you chose to continue your studies at California State University, Long Beach, and we feel confident that you will find that your time here will prepare you for your future career.

Sometimes students ask what they will experience as a graduate student. There are many ways to answer this question, but here are a few things to expect.

1. It is a time for growth. As a graduate student, you are able to choose a specialized program of study that coordinates with your goals. As you engage in coursework and prepare for the research process, you will develop enhanced knowledge and skills and develop a theoretical base for future practice and lifelong learning.
2. It is a time for enhanced engagement and collaboration with peers. Graduate classes have fewer students, and students are held to higher expectations. Student-led discussions, collaborative projects, and creative applications of course content are among the experiences graduate students can expect in the virtual classroom.
3. It is a time to ask questions. A curious mind that integrates classroom learning, work experience, and life experience is a mind prepared for graduate work and research. Your coursework and research as a graduate student should prepare you to understand the importance and application of theory and research to the management of disaster risk. It should equip you with skills that you can use to strengthen your organizations and communities.

This handbook was written with the intention of introducing you to the policies, procedures, and expectations of graduate students. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Welcome to the program!

Christine S. Scott-Hayward, Ph.D.
Graduate Advisor

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1 Program Goals & Learning Outcomes

1.1 Mission

The mission of the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management is to educate students to be ethical leaders in practice, policy, and scholarship; to produce informative and influential research; and to promote justice, equity, and safety through service to our communities.

1.2 Program-Level Learning Objectives

1. Act consistently to expand personal knowledge, gather information from reliable sources, write with a clear purpose, and allow ideas to be challenged and modified.
2. Synthesize the emergency management principles in addressing the present hazard, risk, and vulnerability conditions, anticipating how their interactions may evolve.
3. Summarize information flows within and between organizations to create strategies for involving diverse stakeholders on the disaster risk issue.
4. Promote the value of including diverse community voices in pre-disaster capability building and effectively communicate multifaceted disaster risk problems.
5. Participate in team building and mutual learning processes, incorporating ethical principles and public value into the discourse.
6. Form arguments from evidence, identify an appropriate research design, and use analytics to evaluate a disaster risk emerging from the interactions between the social, built, and physical environments.
7. Apply ethical scientific concepts and processes to problem-solving, decision-making, assessing appropriate technology application, and policy development.
8. Independently research an issue thoroughly: ethically gathers information from a wide range of sources, and reliably identifies critical patterns, trends, and relationships in the data.

1.3 Changes in Policy

This handbook supersedes all previous graduate student handbooks, manuals, and memos. While every effort is made to keep the contents of this document current, The School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management reserves the right to change, delete, suspend, or discontinue parts or the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice subject to the limitations of any formal academic policy enacted by CSULB.

2 ADMISSIONS

2.1 Application Process

The MS in Emergency Services Administration is offered in collaboration with the School of Professional and Continuing Education. The University Office of Enrollment Services and the M.S. in Emergency Services Administration make decisions about admission to the program. Current information about the application process is available on the MSESA website. If you have questions about the application process that are not answered on the website, please contact the Graduate Advisor, Christine Scott-Hayward at christine.scott-hayward@csulb.edu.

2.2 Financial Assistance

Students in this program are eligible for some forms of financial aid, except for the State University Grant (SUG) and Cal Vet College Fee Waiver. GI Bill benefits can be used for this program. Click here to learn more about eligibility, rates, and other details. For information about financial aid and/or scholarships, students should refer to the following resources:

A. Cal State Apply has general financial aid information, links to scholarship databases, and other valuable campus information.

B. Information on Federal Aid Programs. You can complete and submit the FAFSA application to determine eligibility and availability of federal and/or state financial support.

C. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (562-985-5471) for information about available scholarships and/or loans.

D. CSULB Graduate Studies has regional, state, and federal scholarships and CSULB scholarships.

3 WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU HAVE ACCEPTED YOUR OFFER OF ADMISSION

3.1 Registration Using the MyCSULB Student Center

A. Your CSULB ID Number – Upon your admission to the University, you were assigned a CSULB identification number. When you receive it, make sure that you keep that number because you will need it to register for your classes.

B. Registration – After you have your CSULB ID number, you may register for classes using your MyCSULB Student Center.

1. All students should register for the following two classes in their first semester of study:

   a. EMER 500: Information Literacy and Practical Writing Applications for Emergency Management (2 units)
   b. EMER 501: Advanced Concepts in Emergency Management and Homeland Security (3 units)

   If you want to accelerate your degree and enroll in more than two classes, please consult with the Graduate Advisor

2. If you have problems registering for any course, contact the Graduate Advisor. They can help you troubleshoot registration issues, usually by issuing electronic permits for you to register for specific courses that may have prerequisites.

C. Check the online CSULB *Schedule of Classes* (or look online at MyCSULB) to determine when your class starts/end.

3.2 CSULB Student ID Card

If you are local to CSULB, you may want to obtain a Student ID Card. Go to the ID Card Services Office located on the southwest end of The University Bookstore building (facing the Psychology Building). Present a photo ID (driver's license, state ID card, passport, etc.); proof of registration; and a completed agreement form. You will need your CSULB ID Card to check-out books from library services, computer lab access, copier and print services, access to school entertainment, sporting events, obtain software, and use various other facilities on campus.

3.3 CSULB Email

A. Official CSULB Account Required – All graduate students in the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management are ***required*** to have an official CSULB email account and use it as their primary means of electronic communication for all university-related business and activities. Email messages from the School Director and Graduate Advisor will only be sent to official CSULB email addresses. Thus, failing to use your official CSULB email address will mean you will miss important information about meetings, conferences, upcoming deadlines, scholarships, research opportunities, changes in the schedule of classes, course cancellations, and registration. Faculty are not permitted to send email to or respond to email from non-CSULB email accounts.

B. Checking Email Regularly – Because email is the official means by which the School will communicate with its graduate students, it is your responsibility to check your CSULB e-mail account regularly. We highly recommend that you check your e-mail at least once per day.

C. E-mail Etiquette – All email correspondence with administrators and faculty members should comply with the following guidelines. Please also check your class syllabus in case your instructors have different guidelines.

1. Subject Line – Please reference a relevant subject in the subject line of the e-mail (e.g., “Mid-Term in EMER 501”; “Thesis Progress”; “Need an Appointment for Help with Assigned Reading”; etc.) so that your message does not get "lost" among the dozens (sometimes even hundreds) of e-mail messages that faculty members receive each day.

2. Salutation – It is considered good form to begin any correspondence with a polite greeting such as, “Dear Dr. _____” or “Dear Professor _____.” This displays respect and modesty, both of which are simply good etiquette as well as good strategy. If you are trying to elicit a response that may require some effort on the part of the respondent, certainly it makes good sense to present yourself as intelligent and polite.

3. Identify Yourself – Any and all e-mail messages you send should be "signed" with both your first and last name and should include your CSULB ID number.

4. Compose Thoughtfully – While your friends and relatives may not care if you use proper grammar, spell correctly, use slang, or punctuate, the same is not true of formal correspondence. Ignoring the most basic rules of grammar or failing to take the time to proofread correspondence directed to faculty or staff will only serve to make you appear uneducated and unconcerned. This means that you ought not use “instant messaging” shorthand in email correspondence. Unprofessional messages may be ignored. Worse yet, you may make such a negative impression in your email correspondence with faculty members that they will remember that when you ask them to serve on a project committee or write you a letter of recommendation. So, be professional!

5. Timing – It is unwise to send an email message just before an assignment due date. So, you should plan ahead!

4 DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The M.S. in Emergency Services Administration requires 30 semester units of course work. The program consists of six core courses, two elective courses, and two courses to complete the culminating activity.

4.1 18 Units of Required Core Courses

All graduate students must complete the following core courses:

- EMER 500 - Information Literacy and Practical Writing Applications for Emergency Management (2 units)
- EMER 501 - Advanced Concepts in Emergency Management and Homeland Security (3 units)
- EMER 530 - Applied Research Methods and Analytical Techniques for Decision Support and Innovation (4 units)
- EMER 540 - Emergency Management Organizations: Constructs for Influencing Complex Systems (3 units)
- EMER 548 - Risk, Crisis, and Inter-Agency Communications (3 units)
- EMER 661 - Emergency Management Leadership Across the Megacommunity (3 units)

4.2 6 Units of Elective Courses

Graduate students must take two elective courses from the following list. Typically, one elective course is offered each semester. If you wish to enroll in EMER 695, which involves working with a professor on an independent research project, please contact the Graduate Advisor for permission.

- CRJU 604 - Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Criminal Justice (3 units)
- EMER 547 - Continuity of Operations, Recovery, and Emergency Management (3 units)
- EMER 601 - Technology, Cybersecurity, and Emergency Management (3 units)
- EMER 605 - Population Health Constructs for the Emergency Services Sector (3 units)
- EMER 630 - Policy Formulation and Implementation for the Emergency Services (3 units)
- EMER 631 - International Emergency Administration Systems: Comparative Analysis (3 units)
- EMER 690 - Selected Topics in Emergency Management (1-6 units)
- EMER 695 - Independent Study (1-6 units)
- GEOG 558 - Hazards and Risk Management (3 units)

4.3 Completing the Culminating Activity (2 courses)

To satisfy the culminating activity requirement (thesis, project, or comprehensive exam), students must satisfactorily complete 6 units of culminating activity courses as described below. Students will consult with the Graduate Advisor to determine which culminating activity to pursue.

Project Students take the following courses:

- EMER 671 - Strategic Planning and Integrative Practices in Emergency Services Administration (3 units)
- EMER 694 - Project: Strategic Planning and Integrative Practices in Emergency Services Administration (3 units)

Thesis Students take the following courses:

- EMER 671 - Strategic Planning and Integrative Practices in Emergency Services Administration (3 units)
- EMER 698 - Thesis (3 units)

Comprehensive Exam students take the following courses:

Students take either:

- EMER 630 - Policy Formulation and Implementation for the Emergency Services (3 units)
  or
- EMER 671 - Strategic Planning and Integrative Practices in Emergency Services Administration (3 units)

  and
- EMER 697 - Directed Studies (3 units)

4.4 Transfer Credit

A. A maximum of six (6) units of *graduate credit* may be transferred from another accredited university. Please contact the Graduate Advisor to discuss any request to transfer credit.
B. If you have completed the UCLA Emergency Management Certificate Program, please ensure that you have submitted your transcript to CSULB (via Parchment) and then contact the Graduate Advisor to begin the transfer process.

4.5 Course Sequence Considerations and Roadmaps

The M.S. degree is designed to be completed in 21 months (5 semesters (including one summer). A sample course map is below:

Year 1: Fall	Year 1: Spring	Year 1: Summer	Year 2: Fall	Year 2: Spring
EMER 500	EMER 530	EMER 540	EMER 661	EMER 694/697/698
EMER 501	EMER 548	Elective 1	EMER 671/630	Elective 2

Students who wish to pursue an accelerated plan must select the comprehensive exam as their culminating activity and can complete the program in 18 months: See below:

Year 1: Fall	Year 1: Spring	Year 1: Summer	Year 2: Fall
EMER 500	EMER 530	EMER 548	EMER 661
EMER 540	EMER 540	Elective 2	EMER 697
Elective 1	EMER 630		

Students who wish to take fewer than two courses a semester will take longer than two years to complete the program. They should work with the Graduate Advisor to stay on track for graduation. Students **must** complete the program within seven years or courses will begin to expire and will need to be revalidated. *See* Time Limitations: *below.*

4.6 Grades

A. Minimum Grade and GPA Requirements – Students must maintain a cumulative, graduate grade-point average of 3.00 and students must earn a minimum grade of a C in all courses. If a student earns a D or an F grade, they must repeat that course in order the course to count toward the degree.

B. Grade Forgiveness – Students who earn a D or an F grade in a course and repeat the course with a grade of C or higher may apply for grade forgiveness. If granted, both grades will remain on the student's academic record, but the grade and grade points of the forgiven grade will not count toward the grade point average and units earned. Students should consult the Graduate Advisor to discuss grade forgiveness. **Note: culminating activity courses are not eligible for grade forgiveness and only one grade may be forgiven during the student's course of study.**

4.7 Withdrawal Policy

A. For current information, please review the information contained on the Student Records website: Dropping and Withdrawing.

B. Withdrawal in the First Two Weeks of a Semester – Students may drop classes withdraw during this period using the self-service registration on MyCSULB Student Center.

C. Withdrawal between the Second and Twelfth Week of a Semester – Withdrawals during this period of a semester are permissible only for "*serious and compelling reasons*." To withdraw from a course during this period, students must complete a withdrawal request on MyCSULB Student Center. Withdrawals must be approved by both the professor teaching the course and the CCJEM School Director.

1. When completing the form, the student must state the "serious and compelling" reason(s) why he/she/they are seeking the withdrawal. Students are well-advised that the "W" is not intended to be used as a mechanism to avoid receiving the grade one has duly earned. Thus, poor performance in a course never constitutes a "serious and compelling reason," and no course withdrawals will be authorized on the basis of a student earning low grades in a course.

2. Withdrawals must be approved by both the professor teaching the course and the CCJEM School Director. As a rule, the School Director will authorize withdrawals from courses only if: (a) the student consistently made serious attempts to succeed in the course; and (b) the student is able to explain serious and compelling reasons for his/her/their need to withdraw from the course. If these criteria are not met, the School Director will not authorize your withdrawal from any course unless there is an emergency situation necessitating withdrawal, such as accident or serious illness.

D. Withdrawal During the Final Three Weeks of a Semester – Withdrawals in the final three weeks of a semester are termed "*catastrophic withdrawals*" and are not granted absent the most "*serious and extenuating*" of reasons, such as a serious medical condition that requires withdrawal from all courses. The procedure for withdrawal during this period is the same as in subsection C (above) with the addition that the Dean or Associate Dean of the College of Health and Human Services must also approve the student's request for withdrawal.

4.8 Academic Warning

Graduate students are placed on academic warning when their cumulative grade-point average or grade-point average on all courses applicable to the degree falls below 3.0. Graduate students will be removed from academic warning when their overall grade-point average, their cumulative grade-point average at California State University, Long Beach, and their grade-point average on all courses applicable to the degree are 3.0 (B) or higher. More information on academic warning and disqualification is in Policy Statement 22-14.

4.9 Academic Disqualification Based on Grades

Once placed on academic warning, a student is given two semesters to bring their GPA to a minimum of 3.0. Only grades earned in the MS in ESA program can offset a GPA deficiency. Graduate and post-baccalaureate students will be disqualified if while on

academic warning they fail to earn grades of sufficient quality to remove themselves from their status as students on academic warning. Graduate and post-baccalaureate students who have been disqualified must demonstrate they have improved their GPA to achieve good academic standing prior to readmission.

4.10 Academic Disqualification Based on Academic Dishonesty

Any student who engages in an act of academic dishonesty may be disqualified from the graduate program on that basis alone, regardless of the student's grade point average. As with disqualification based on low grades, academic disqualification for acts of academic dishonesty also prevents the student from any further enrollment at CSULB.

4.11 Administrative Academic Warning

A graduate student may be placed on administrative academic warning by action of appropriate campus officials for any of the following reasons:

A. Withdrawal from all or a substantial portion of a program of study in two successive semesters or in any three semesters, unless the withdrawals were directly associated with a chronic or recurring medical condition or its treatment;
B. Repeated failure to progress toward the stated degree objective or other program objective (when such failure appears to be due to circumstances within the control of the student);
C. Failure to comply, after due notice, with an academic requirement or regulation which is routine for all students or a defined group of students.

4.12 Administrative Academic Disqualification

If a student does not meet good academic standing rules within one semester of being placed on administrative academic warning, then they will be evaluated for administrative academic disqualification. A student who has been placed on administrative academic warning may be disqualified from further attendance if:

A. The conditions for removal of administrative academic warning are not met within the period specified;
B. The student becomes subject to academic warning while on administrative academic warning;
C. The student becomes subject to administrative academic warning for the same or similar reason for which they have been placed on administrative-academic warning previously, although not currently on such status;

4.13 Residency Requirements

No fewer than 24 semester units shall be completed in residence at the University. Students must be continuously enrolled in the program or take an educational leave. If not, students must reapply to the University.

4.14 Educational Leaves

An approved Educational Leave of Absence permits a student to be absent from the University for a specified number of semesters (one semester minimum; one calendar year maximum) while authorizing the student to return and continue to study under catalog

requirements that applied prior to the absence. Any student in good academic standing may request an Educational Leave. Newly admitted graduate students have no current record with which to evaluate academic standing; thus, new students are ineligible for an Educational Leave in their first semester of study. More information on educational leaves and how to request them is available on the CSULB Educational Leave website. Please consult with the Graduate Advisor before requesting an educational leave as they must approve all leaves. Note: The period of an Educational Leave is counted in the calculation of elapsed time under the regulations governing the maximum period for completion of degree requirements.

4.15 Time Limitations:

CSULB mandates that all requirements for all master's degrees must be completed within seven years of the date the student's program of study was initiated (i.e., the semester when the earliest course appearing on the student's program was completed). An extension of time beyond the limit may be granted by the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs/Dean of Graduate Studies if warranted by individual circumstances on the condition that outdated work is validated by a comprehensive examination in the relevant course or such other demonstration of competence as may be prescribed by the School.

4.16 G S 700

G S 700 is intended to be taken when a student believes they will be graduating at the end of that semester and does not need or desire to take additional courses. G S 700 is a cost-effective means by which to extend enrollment by one semester while completing the thesis/project or re-taking the comprehensive exam. Students may only enroll in G S 700 *after* they have Advanced to Candidacy

A. Students must enroll in G S 700 during:

   1. Each semester they use any of the University's resources (including, but not limited to, faculty, staff, library, and/or other facilities/services) but are not enrolled in any courses; and/or
   2. The semester they are taking the comprehensive examination, submitting their thesis the University's Thesis Office, or graduating, if they are not enrolled in any other courses at the University.

   In other words, students *must* be enrolled in a course or G S 700 during the semester in which they intend to graduate. Although G S 700 is a zero-unit course, the fee is based on one unit of credit for payment purposes; no unit credit is added to the student's program or transcript.

B. Students enrolling in G S 700 should consult with the Graduate Advisor so that the Graduate Advisor can check the student's degree progress and verify compliance with all applicable policies and procedures. Once approved, students should enroll in **G S 700A** via MyCSULB.

   1. Unless compelling circumstances exist, students are permitted to register for G S 700 for a maximum of two (2) semesters.

   2. Students who have enrolled in G S 700 twice or more will have a registration hold. These students will be notified of the hold via email and referred to their Graduate Advisor.

C. Graduate students do not need to register for G S 700 during the winter or summer sessions, **unless** the student is graduating during that term.

D. Graduate students enrolled in G S 700 are ***neither*** considered full-time students for financial aid purposes ***nor*** part-time students for student loan purposes. Thus, students enrolled in G S 700 do not qualify for financial aid and cannot defer loan payments.

E. International graduate students enrolled in G S 700 ***must*** obtain a Full Course Exception from the Center for International Education. CIE discourages traveling outside of the U.S. during this time.

5 ADVANCING TO CANDIDACY

Advancement to candidacy signifies approval of a finalized plan of graduate study. Students may advance to candidacy once they have selected their culminating activity. Typically this occurs within the first few weeks of enrollment in EMER 671.

5.1 Requirements for Advancing to Candidacy

Students are required to complete all of the requirements listed in this section in order to advance to candidacy.

A. Satisfaction of the general University requirements for advancement to candidacy;
B. Completion of all core courses;
C. Maintenance of a “B” average (3.0 GPA) in all work completed as a graduate student at CSULB;
D. Approval of the Emergency Management Graduate Advisor, Faculty and Associate Dean of Student Success and Academic Affairs, College of Health and Human Services.

5.2 Advancing to Candidacy

A. Timing – Advancement to Candidacy must take place at least one semester before graduation. It is recommended that students Advance to Candidacy at the beginning of their second year of graduate school, if possible, to avoid a delay in graduation.
B. Approval – Once you have Advanced to Candidacy, this will be reflected in your MyCSULB Student Center
C. Changes – Once a student has advanced to candidacy and selected a culminating activity, changes to the culminating activity are not possible except where there are serious and compelling circumstances and with the approval of the Graduate Advisor.

6 CULMINATING ACTIVITY – THE PROJECT

All emergency services administration graduate students must complete a culminating activity to earn the M.S. in ESA. The culminating activities offered by the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management are a project (also known as the applied thesis), the comprehensive examination, and a thesis. This section explains the procedures for the project option in the Emergency Management program.

6.1 Who Should Complete the Project?

Most students in the program will complete the project. In the project, students synthesize research and apply it to emergency management practice. The project gives students an opportunity to take on a real-world issue or organizational need, and provide a useful product to fill the gap, provide a potential solution, or begin a process toward policy and practice changes. In the process, students apply the theory and research skills they have mastered in the program.

Students must enroll in EMER 671 for three (3) units and then EMER 694 for three (3) units to complete this culminating activity.

6.2 Content and Format of the Project

As per the State of California's Title V., "A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It is described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project's significance, objective, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation. An oral defense of the project may be required."

MS in ESA applied projects are expected to have direct impact within a professional organization or the public/private community served. The possibilities are vast and the examples listed below are by no means a comprehensive list of acceptable projects. Students might undertake projects designed to:

- ➢ Develop a comprehensive or specific hazard disaster management plan;
- ➢ Evaluate an existing program;
- ➢ Design a program intended to directly address a specific problem within an organization;
- ➢ Conduct a white paper policy analysis;
- ➢ Design an employee training program or public information campaign;
- ➢ Create a disaster exercise program;
- ➢ Write a fully developed grant proposal;
- ➢ Generate an audio-visual tool;
- ➢ Develop a website or design social media tools;
- ➢ Implement a new collaborative process to address a specific hazard;
- ➢ Conduct a targeted community risk assessment.

Some students may focus their project on a current problem within their own organization; other students may use their academic experience to test their problem-solving competencies to address a problem within another community entity. The problem and community served should be specific.

6.3 Organizational Approval

An important part of the project is the interface of research translated to practice. Students are required to collaborate with a community partner(s) for advancing the science of emergency management and strengthen the communities within which students live and work.

The project must be conducted in partnership within the community of interest. The specific organization or entity you are partnering with must approve the project before work begins. Approval for the project must be submitted in writing by an administrative supervisor, usually at the level of command staff, city management, or agency director. The written approval, written on the partner's letterhead, can take the form of a simple letter or memo of one or more paragraphs, and must be submitted to the EMER 694 course Dropbox for review by your instructor at the beginning of the semester.

6.4 Project Supervision

A student's project committee (identified in EMER 671, active in EMER 694) shall consist of at least three members qualified in the areas relating to the project topic. Students are not assigned Project Committee members. Rather, each student in consultation with their project chair shall select potential committee members. At least two of the committee members must be CSULB faculty. The instructor for EMER 694 will serve in the role of *Project Chair*; as the course instructor is responsible for guiding the student through the thesis development process, and assigning a final grade. The second member will be a CSULB faculty member with subject matter expertise and the third committee member is typically a subject matter expert from the community of practice. We recommend that this third committee member not come from one's immediate office or be in one's immediate *Chain-of-Command*. The intent of an external committee member is to provide for a practical expert reviewer. A student may invite a fourth committee member who is a senior administrator from their own organization; importantly, this member will not have a formal vote in the final assessment of the project.

6.5 Starting Your Project Research

The Project Chair will direct the project research. Students should consult with their project chair to assess if IRB approval is needed before they start conducting any research on human subjects. This should occur in EMER 671 In developing their project, students shall work with their collaborating partner.

6.6 Institutional Review Board (IRB)

At CSULB, the Office of University Research houses the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Whether students are obtaining data or utilizing existing data, the introductory CITI course and the appropriate IRB form will need to be completed and submitted for review. It is the student's responsibility to complete and submit the required forms and supporting documentation in a timely way, first to the project chair and then to the IRB (if necessary), so as not to delay conducting the research. CSULB IRB has current information and forms. Be advised, the IRB does not review applications over the winter or summer. Thus, students should complete their IRB proposal while enrolled in EMER 671 to avoid delays.

6.7 Completing the Project

The final project is to follow the CSULB University style and formatting guidelines. Students should refer to the CSULB Format Manual for Theses and Dissertations. The School of CCJEM requires that the project follow APA guidelines.

The procedures of project development and report writing are iterative. You are strongly encouraged to be in frequent communication with your project committee, and especially your community partner during the development process. Several writing phases exist, in which each chapter drafted will be reviewed first by an assigned peer, then by the project chair, and finally by the entire project committee. At each one of these intervals, revisions and improvement can be expected to be addressed before sending the new revision to the next level of feedback and approval.

A. Project Committee Approval – When a student has completed a written version of their project that is satisfactory to their Project Chair (i.e., the Project Chair approves the project), the student must distribute the project to the other members of their Project Committee. These faculty members may require the student to make additions or changes to the project. Students must be responsive to the feedback of all their Project Committee members.

B. Project Presentation – As a final component, the student will develop and record a presentation about the project and the work conducted. The presentation must be viewed and approved by the full project committee.

6.8 Grading of the Project

A grade for EMER 694 is not received until the student submits their final project. In the interim, a grade of RP will be listed on the transcript. To successfully complete the M.S. in Emergency Services Administration, students shall earn a B or better on their project.

7 CULMINATING ACTIVITY – COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

All emergency services administration graduate students must complete a culminating activity to earn the M.S. in ESA. The culminating activities offered by the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management are a project (also known as the applied thesis), the comprehensive examination, and a thesis. This section explains the procedures for the comprehensive examination option in the Emergency Management program.

7.1 Who Should Take the Comprehensive Examination?

The comprehensive examination is an assessment of the student's ability to integrate the knowledge of the area, show critical and independent thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. The results of the examination provide evidence of independent thinking, appropriate organization, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation.

Students who wish to complete the comprehensive exam (also known as "the comp exam") must enroll in EMER 697, Independent Study for 3 units in preparation for the comprehensive examination. This course will help you prepare for, and complete, the comprehensive examination. Students may not take the comprehensive examination

unless they have advanced to candidacy for the master's degree or unless advancement to candidacy will occur in the semester prior to semester in which the exam takes place.

Students must register for the Comprehensive Exam and EMER 697 by contacting the Graduate Advisor.

7.2 Content and Format of the Comprehensive Exam

A. Faculty Design and Score Exam – The comprehensive examination provides an opportunity for the master's degree candidate to demonstrate analytic ability and knowledge of the discipline. With this purpose in mind, and per University Policy 25-12, School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management faculty members prepare the comprehensive examination questions and score the responses.

B. Evolving Nature of the Exam – The comprehensive examination is a written exam. The specific parameters of the exam often evolve to meet student needs, program learning goals, or pedagogical advancements. Thus, the substance and structure of the exam may vary from that which is provided in this document. Nothing contained in this document is meant to concretize the format of the exam in a manner which binds the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management in any way. In other words, the actual exam content, format, and timeline may vary from the guidelines specified herein.

C. Sample Format – With the disclaimer specified above, we offer the following example to illustrate the typical format of the comprehensive examination in emergency services administration. Typically, the exam is an all-essay test comprised of one question that assesses an area of specialization selected by the student and the policies associated with that area of specialization. The Graduate Committee will provide a list of substantive areas that the student can choose from, and a specific topic will be chosen by the Graduate Committee, on which the essay prompt will be based.

D. Typical Timeline – The comprehensive examination format and timelines may change in response to student feedback and pedagogical needs identified by the Graduate Committee. In this case, students will be notified of such changes as early as possible. The following, however, should serve as a rough estimate of the sequence and timing of both student and faculty responsibilities.

   Topic Selection and Approval – By the end of the third week in the semester of writing the comprehensive exam, students must select one of the substantive areas on which to write the comprehensive examination. The student will be given the subtopic for which their comprehensive exam will be based on.

   Reading List Approval - By the end of the fifth week in the semester of writing the comprehensive exam, the student must develop a customized reading list in MSWord in APA format that includes a minimum of 25 peer-reviewed sources (maximum of 30 sources) and at least two sources from popular culture (e.g., newspapers or magazine articles) relevant to the topic selected by the graduate committee. The sources must be credible, include both seminal and current works, and cover relevant risk and resilience issues in planning, mitigation, response, or recovery, theory, and policy and administrative implications, as is relevant to the topic. The reading lists should demonstrate both breadth and depth of the topic.

Taking the Exam – Students will respond to one question that is created by the Graduate Committee that is based on the subtopic chosen by the graduate committee and the reading list created by the student. The question will require students to cover relevant risk and resilience issues in emergency planning, mitigation, response or recovery, theory, and policy and administrative implications associated with their topic. The exam will be taken online with your personal laptop (school computers could be provided; such requests must be made 72 hours in advance of exam day). Students do not need to memorize sources, as students are permitted to access their notes and reading list sources during the exam (i.e., the exam is open book and open note). The use of AI is **not** permitted. Individualized exam questions and the submitted reference list will be submitted via the EMER 697 Canvas page or by email. Students have 48 hours to complete the exam. Although there is no page requirement, passing exams tend to be around 10-12 pages.

7.3 Timing of the Comprehensive Exam

Students will take the comprehensive exam as soon as practicable after completing the requisite courses. For most students, that will be at the end of their second year in the program. Students who pass the comprehensive examination and who also successfully complete the course requirements are eligible to graduate. Students who fail the comprehensive examination will be permitted to revise and resubmit their comp exam in the same semester it was taken. If they fail to adequately address the feedback they will be required to enroll in GS 700 while preparing to retake the exam.

7.4 Grading of the Comprehensive Exam

The essay portion of the comprehensive exam is graded on a high pass/pass/fail basis. The grade for the EMER 697 depends on the grade of the comprehensive exam (e.g. high pass = A and pass = B). A failing comprehensive exam will receive an RP grade. The graduate advisor and one member of the graduate committee (or a faculty member with expertise in the area) will read and score each essay response. If there is a borderline case, an additional faculty member will grade the response.
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7.5 Tips for Passing the Comprehensive Exam

After studying the essay responses of the students who have failed the comprehensive exam over all test administrations in the M.S. in Criminology & Criminal Justice, the members of the CCJ Graduate Committee have discerned a pattern and their observations are shared here to provide some tips. Nearly every person who failed the comprehensive exam shared one or more of the following four major shortcomings:

A. **They failed to respond to all parts of the question**. For example, a question may have two or three subparts, all of which must be addressed in students' essay responses. Omitting responses to even just one of the subparts of a question will negatively affect a student's exam grade.

B. **They failed to integrate the literature in a meaningful way**. For example, several students wrote full responses to all subparts of an essay question, but they did so without integrating most of the literature on the reading list. Indeed, some used only eight to ten of the assigned articles, while others who failed did not cite any literature whatsoever. Alternatively, others relied only on a single textbook and/or some classic citations from leading studies that were old without regard to integrating a sufficient

amount of recent literature contained on the applicable reading lists. The members of the Graduate Committee devote considerable time and care into reviewing and revising the reading lists. We expect that students will actually do the assigned reading and integrate most of the assigned articles on the reading lists into their essay responses. Failing to do so by synthesizing the relevant literature into your essay answers will also negatively affect a student's exam grade.

C. **They failed to explain their responses in reasonable detail**. Some students have written only a few pages with incomplete or disconnected written thoughts. The types of questions that we ask on the essay portion of the comprehensive exam call for more in-depth answers than a paragraph or two in response to each subpart of an essay question. Students have 48 hours to write responses to one essay question. While quality of the responses is certainly more important than the length of essay responses, it is safe to say that high-quality responses will consist of 10-12 pages of writing. Students who write only a few pages are unlikely to have evidenced significant breadth and depth in their responses to warrant a "pass" on a master's level comprehensive exam.

D. **They failed to structure their responses into a well-organized and well-written essay**. To be clear, we do not expect our master's students to write flawless essays under stressful testing conditions. We do expect, however, that the essays will be written well enough that they evidence a reasonable command of the English language. We have failed a very small percentage of students whose essays were nearly incomprehensible. We are not talking about dangling participles, split infinitives, or grammar errors such as confusing "who" and "whom." Rather, we have failed people: who wrote run-on "sentences" that ran a page or more; who wrote essays full of "sentences" that lacked subjects and verbs; or whose essays lacked any semblance of a paragraph and/or organizational structure. We cannot, in good conscience, graduate people with master's degrees who cannot write a few pages clearly enough so that readers of their work understand what they are trying to communicate.

In short, if you do the reading and integrate it into essays that are fully responsive to all parts of the questions posed, and you run a grammar and spell-check on your essay before submitting them, there is really no reason why you should not pass the comprehensive exam.

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7.6 Consequence of Failing the Comprehensive Exam

A. Failing on the First Attempt – Students who fail the comprehensive exam the first time they take it will receive a revise and resubmit with feedback from the graders. After receiving the feedback students will have a week to address the feedback. In other words, students who fail on their initial attempt are given the opportunity to revise and resubmit their exam. Failing the exam may delay graduation for at least one semester.

B. Failing the Revise and Resubmit – If a student fails the revise and resubmit, they will have to enroll in G S 700 the next semester and will have one more chance to address the feedback. If they fail the comprehensive exam by not adequately addressing the revise and resubmit a second time the student must petition the school director to take the comprehensive exam again.

8 CULMINATING ACTIVITY – THESIS

All emergency services administration graduate students must complete a culminating activity to earn the M.S. in ESA. The culminating activities offered by the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management are a project (also known as the applied thesis), the comprehensive examination, and a thesis. This section of the Handbook is devoted to the thesis option.

8.1 What Is a Thesis?

The thesis is a written product of the systematic study of a significant problem. It clearly identifies the problem, articulates major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, reviews the relevant literature, sets forth the sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation.

8.2 Who Should Write a Thesis?

The thesis is a supervised research experience in the application of theory and analytical tools to an issue in emergency services administration. The thesis is usually far more time-consuming than the other culminating activities and typically takes longer to complete than originally planned by the student due to unforeseen delays. The thesis experience is primarily designed to prepare students for graduate work at the doctoral level and so is only recommended for students who plan on enrolling in a doctoral program.

Students must enroll in EMER 671 for three (3) units and then EMER 698 for three (3) units to complete this culminating activity. If completion of the thesis takes longer than one semester, students should enroll in G S 700.

8.3 Thesis Supervision

The thesis is supervised by a Thesis Committee. Thesis Committees must be comprised of at least three members; a student may elect to have up to five committee members, but only three are required, including a Thesis Committee Chair. The instructor for EMER 698 will serve in the role of *Thesis Chair*, and as course instructor is also responsible for assigning a final grade to the thesis report and the overall course. The other two required members must also be CSULG faculty members. Students are not assigned Thesis Committee members. Rather, each student in consultation with their thesis chair shall select potential committee members. However, the student is responsible for initiating contact with faculty members and asking them if they would be willing to work with the student on a thesis

8.4 Selecting Thesis Committee Members

Students are not assigned Thesis Committee members. Rather, each student in consultation with their thesis chair shall select potential committee members. However, the student is responsible for initiating contact with faculty members and asking them if they would be willing to work with the student on a thesis.

8.5 Publication Agreement

The School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management requires all students electing to research and write a thesis to execute a Thesis Publication Agreement. These agreements are required to preserve the rights of both students and faculty members in light of the work they collectively contribute to the production of master's theses of such quality that they can yield refereed publications. Thesis students **must** submit the Publication Agreement to the Graduate Advisor prior to beginning a thesis and/or enrolling in EMER 698.

8.6 Starting Your Thesis Research

The procedures for thesis research and writing are iterative, with continuous feedback and adjustments identified from your thesis chair and committee members. Students are encouraged to be in frequent communication with the thesis committee of experts during the development process. The updates and communications will provide important direction in the research process. Independent research tends to occur in four recognizable phases:

1. Foundational Steps
2. Writing and Analysis
3. Revisions and more Revisions
4. Finalizing, Presenting, and Submitting.

8.7 Institutional Review Board (IRB)

At CSULB, the Office of University Research houses the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Whether students are obtaining data or utilizing existing data, the introductory CITI course and the appropriate IRB form will need to be completed and submitted for review. It is the student's responsibility to complete and submit the required forms and supporting documentation in a timely way, first to the committee chair and then to the IRB (if necessary), so as not to delay conducting the research. CSULB IRB has current information and forms. Be advised, the IRB does not review applications over the winter or summer. Thus, students need to complete their IRB proposal while enrolled in EMER 671.

8.8 Completing the Thesis

The final project is to follow the CSULB University style and formatting guidelines. Students should refer to the CSULB Format Manual for Theses and Dissertations. The School of CCJEM requires that the project follow APA guidelines.

After securing a Thesis Committee Chair and receiving approval to move forward with a thesis topic, students will should work on the preliminary chapters of their thesis (Introduction, Literature Review, and Research Design and Methodology) in EMER 671. They should also begin to gather data. Then, in EMER 698, students will finish gathering the data, analyze the data, and complete the thesis write-up.

A. Thesis Committee Approval – When a student has completed a written version of their thesis that is satisfactory to their Thesis Committee Chair (i.e., the Thesis Chair approves the thesis), the student must distribute the project to the other members of their Thesis Committee. These faculty members may require the student to make additions or changes to the project. Students must be responsive to the feedback of all their Thesis Committee members.

B. School Director Approval – After all Thesis Committee members are satisfied with a student's thesis, the student must submit the committee-approved thesis to the Director of the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management **no later than one month** before the thesis submission deadline prescribed by the CSULB Thesis and Dissertation Office. The School Director shall review the thesis to ensure that it meets all university requirements in terms of style, format, and, most importantly, quality of content. The School Director may require the student to make additions or changes to the thesis they are willing to accept the thesis on behalf of the University. Once the School Director is willing to approve the thesis, it is the student's responsibility to gather all of the signatures of their Thesis Committee members and the School Director and then submit the finalized thesis to the Thesis Office in the CSULB Library before the prescribed deadline.

C. Thesis Office Approval – After a thesis is approved by the Thesis Committee Members and the Director of the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management, it must be submitted and approved by the University Thesis Review Office. Reviewers in this office can reject a thesis if it does not conform to University's requirements. For example, the references and citations must be APA citation style, and certain fonts must be used. To make sure that the format of your thesis complies with all applicable University requirements (including specific submission deadlines), contact the CSULB Thesis and Dissertation Office.

9 GRADUATION

9.1 Request to Graduate

Students who expect to receive their master's degree at the end of any semester or session must be enrolled during that semester or session and must Apply to Graduate on MyCSULB well in advance of their desired graduation.

A. Approved Advancement to Candidacy – Before filing a Request to Graduate Form, a student must confirm that they have advancement to candidacy. Students can review their Academic Requirements Report in MyCSULB to confirm this. Students must also check with the Graduate Advisor to assess and update their student records to ensure that Enrollment Services has all necessary documents, including transcripts from other institutions, petitions, and waivers.

B. Request to Graduate – Please Apply to Graduate and pay the Commencement and Diploma Fee via MyCSULB. Once filed, your application will be evaluated to assess eligibility for graduation and produce a degree audit, summarizing the student's progress and indicating all remaining requirements to be met. If the Application to Graduate is filed by the deadline, the student will receive the degree audit prior to registration for the final semester. Students should carefully check the audit and make sure that any errors are corrected.

C. Deadlines

1. To graduate at the end of the fall semester or winter intercession, the Request to Graduate Form must be filed by the preceding March 1.

2. To graduate at the end of the spring semester or in summer session, the Request to Graduate Form must be filed by the preceding October 1.

D. Late Filing – If a student misses the filing deadline, they can still apply for graduation but will need to pay an additional missed deadline fee.

9.2 Degree Clearing

Degree clearing is the final review of student records verifying that the student has satisfied all of the graduation requirements indicated on the degree audit.

A. This review begins three weeks after completion of final exams of the student's final semester or session and takes up to three months to complete. Students should check with the Graduate Advisor to make sure their records are complete.

B. If graduation depends upon any classes that the student has taken outside CSULB during the final semester or session, transcripts must be received from those institutions by July 1 for Spring, October 1 for Summer, February 1 for Fall, and March 1 for Winter graduation.

C. If all program requirements have not been completed, the Request to Graduate will be canceled, and a new graduation date must be selected.

D. A student may not register for the semester following intended graduation unless graduation has been rescheduled.

9.3 Receiving the Degree

If all degree requirements are met, the degree and any additional honors will be added to the transcript upon completion of degree clearing. A transcript is an official verification of completion of the degree. Diplomas are typically ready within two to three months after the degree is recorded (approximately six months after completion of coursework). Degree recipients will receive a postcard with instructions regarding receipt of the diploma.

9.4 Commencement

Students may participate in the commencement ceremony immediately preceding or following their graduation date. One graduation ceremony is held per year at the conclusion of the spring semester. The official graduation date will depend on when the student actually fulfills all requirements and has officially been cleared. Attending a commencement ceremony does not constitute graduation. Cap and gowns may be rented or purchased at the University Bookstore, usually beginning in late April or early May.

10 SCHOLARLY CONFERENCES

10.1 Conference Information

The School encourages students to join the CSULB student branch of the International Association of Emergency Managers and attend and/or present their research at the annual IAEM conference and/or the annual conference of the California Emergency Services Association.

10.2 Travel Assistance from the University

Students may receive limited funding from the University to enhance their educational experience by traveling to professional conferences and events. More information can be obtained from the Graduate Center.

11 HONORS AND AWARDS

The University, College of Health and Human Services, and the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management recognize outstanding graduate students each year. M.S. in ESA students are eligible for several awards and honors including the Graduate Dean's List, Graduate Student Honors, Outstanding Thesis Award, and Outstanding Project Award. In addition, two awards are given specifically to MS in ESA students – the Adam Bragg Award and the Claire Rubin award. More information about all of these awards is available on the Canvas Graduate Student Resource page.

12 SPECIAL UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

12.1 Career Development

Career resources are available in the Career Development Center (CDC). In addition, the Graduate Advisor will post information about jobs and internships on the MSESA Canvas Site.

A. The Career Development Center, which is part of the University's Student Services Division, is free and open to all current CSULB students and alumni who are recent graduates (i.e., graduated no more than 3 months ago). After three months, CSULB alumni can use the services of the Career Development Center for a fee of $75.00 per year.

B. The Career Development Center is committed to teaching skills and techniques to enhance the ability of students and alumni to set and obtain career goals. The Center does not operate as a typical "employment agency" with the sole purpose of securing employment for students. Rather, the staff provides a variety of programs and services, which assist students/alumni in determining and implementing their career and educational choices. The services of the CDC include:

1. career counseling
2. a career resource library
3. on-campus interviews with several hundred employers
4. computer-assisted career guidance
5. a variety of workshops, including career planning, career change, résumé writing, interviewing techniques, and job search techniques
6. a variety of career-related publications

12.2 Bob Murphy Access Center and the Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of CSULB to comply with all the relevant and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accordingly, if you are diagnosed with special learning needs, or if you have either a physical limitation or a mental disability, please reach out to the Bob Murphy Access Center ("BMAC"). BMAC provides educational access for students with disabilities by working with campus and community partners to provide accommodations, resources, and assistive technology. Through these efforts, BMAC supports students with meeting their academic goals and completing their degree programs.

13 POLICIES AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All students are urged to become familiar with CSULB's Campus Regulations (i.e., the rules and standards of conduct that students are expected to follow). These rules and regulations can be found here. As graduate students you are expected to adhere to all these rules and regulations, including the Standards for Student Conduct.

13.1 Academic Integrity

Of particular importance to graduate students is academic integrity. In addition to academic performance, students are expected to demonstrate the qualities of honesty and integrity. All submissions by a student are expected to be the original work product of the submitting student. Material that violates this requirement in any way, or that constitutes any form of dishonesty, cheating, fabrication, the facilitation of academic dishonesty, and/or plagiarism, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course and in appropriate disciplinary action being initiated. Please see the official CSULB Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism (Policy Statement 21-01) for more details about the consequences of academic dishonest