

Graduate Degree Annotations at UCSC

Approved by Graduate Council on December 3, 2009; revised on April 2012

Effective December 15, 2009

Introduction

This document describes the two types of degree annotations available to graduate students at UCSC. It replaces and supersedes earlier policies and terminologies used in the *2008-2010 General Catalog* and before, and brings UCSC usage and practices into closer agreement with the rest of the University of California. In addition to describing the annotations, this document also explains how students fulfill the requirements for them, and how departments propose them to Graduate Council for approval.

The two types of annotations are called *concentrations* and *designated emphasis*. Broadly, these are as follows:

1. *Concentrations* denote areas of specialized curriculum, training, and research within a given department or degree-granting program.
2. *Designated Emphasis* denotes a broadening of training that comes from adding course work, training, and/or research work from an *external* department¹, degree-granting program, or cross-departmental grouping of faculty who together offer a designated emphasis. Example: a PhD in Literature with an Emphasis in Feminist Studies. In this case, the extra training to obtain the Emphasis is offered by the separate Feminist Studies Department, not Literature.

Note: Previously, the term parenthetical notation (“parentheticals”) was used generically to describe both concentrations and emphases. However, this term was not clearly described or consistently applied. After December 15, 2009, the terms concentration and designated emphasis will be clearly distinguished, and the generic “parenthetical notation” will no longer be used.

The two new types of annotations are now further described.

Concentrations

Concentrations are easier to manage since no additional coordination between departments and/or degree-granting programs is required. Graduate Council wishes to keep the paperwork and monitoring requirements of concentrations to a minimum. The elements of the concentration are as follows:

1. The requirements for a concentration are developed and defined within each degree-granting program.
2. Minimum requirements are a significant body of research work in the area of the concentration, a minimum number of courses (number to be determined by the degree-granting program), emphasis on the area of concentration in the qualifying exam, or a

¹ Departments that would like to offer a Designated Emphasis *internal* to their department may petition Graduate Council for an exception to policy.

combination of these. As long as this rule is observed, the proposed concentration does not need to be reviewed and approved by Graduate Council.

3. The requirements to fulfill a concentration should not add additional degree requirements beyond those already in place to fulfill the basic degree. Any additional requirements would constitute a program revision and require additional review by the Graduate Council. In general, the development of concentrations within a program should be done within the parameters of the existing program requirements and thus not require Graduate Council review.
4. The decision to award a student the concentration will be made by the department chair, the faculty graduate director, or an appropriately constituted faculty committee drawn from the degree-granting program, according to departmental procedure.
5. The concentration is an informal annotation; no notation of it appears on the student's transcript or diploma. However the student will have the right to note the concentration in his/her curriculum vitae using the words "a degree in XXX with a concentration in YYY." The department may refer to the student's degree with the concentration noted, and writers of letters of reference may note the concentration when referring to the student's degree.
6. The responsibility for keeping records of students who have received concentrations rests with the degree-awarding department or program. No records of concentrations will be kept by the Registrar.
7. The availability of concentrations will be noted in each program's description in the *General Catalog*. Each concentration and its requirements will be described, and a summary of all concentrations will be given in the Fields of Study summary table at the beginning of the catalog. It is the responsibility of departments to review and update the catalog text pertaining to concentrations, so that current practice is officially recorded.

Designated Emphasis

A Designated Emphasis (DE) generally involves the cooperation of two degree-granting programs. The program that provides the courses and training in the subject of the emphasis is called the *offering program*, and these programs are said to *offer emphases*. A program whose students utilize the courses and training from the emphasis in its degree program is called the *coordinating program*, and these programs are said to *coordinate emphases*. In the example of Literature above, the program description could say, "Ph.D. students in Literature may wish to consider the designated emphases in x, y, z; students must have the designated emphasis approved by the graduate director / graduate committee as well as meet the requirements of the emphasis."

Designated Emphases are official UCSC credentials, and as such their requirements must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Council. **To simplify the process, we henceforth require that all programs wishing to offer a designated emphasis will establish a single set of requirements for all students regardless of their primary program of study.** This uniformity of emphasis requirements for students in all coordinating departments is a major

change that will reduce record-keeping and approvals. It differs from older practice, where each coordinating and each emphasis-offering department negotiated *separate agreements* with each other on the content of their joint “parenthetical notations.”

The elements of a Designated Emphasis (DE) are as follows:

1. Requirements will typically include more than one of the following elements:
 - A. Course work in the offering program;
 - B. Offering program faculty membership on qualifying or thesis committee;
 - C. Significant writing, research, teaching, presentation, or production in the discipline of the offering program.
2. The requirements for the DE will be set by the emphasis-offering program and designed to be generally applicable to students from any coordinating program.
3. Departments proposing a DE must explicitly address the resource implications of the proposed emphasis and include confirmation from the Divisional Dean of resource-neutrality or a commitment of resources to support the DE sustainably. The DE requirements and resource implications must be reviewed by Graduate Council for approval.
4. Ph.D. students should declare their intent to undertake a DE prior to the execution of their Qualifying Examination by indicating their intent on the appropriate form available from the Division of Graduate Studies. Students that choose to undertake a DE subsequent to their successful completion of the Qualifying Examination may do so upon successful petition to the Dean of Graduate Studies by the Graduate Committee or Departmental Chair of both the emphasis-offering and coordinating departments. Any student who has declared intent should be allowed to complete the DE with an analogous set of requirements in accordance with the catalog description at the time the intent is declared.
5. The coordinating program will approve student requests for the DE annotation through departmental graduate approval procedures, and the emphasis-offering program will certify completion of the DE requirements.
6. The DE is a formal credential, and records will be kept of it on the student’s transcript in the Registrar’s office and on the student’s diploma. The words used will be “a degree awarded in XXX with an emphasis in YYY.” The parenthetical notation will no longer be used.
7. The offering of DE programs will be noted in the *General Catalog*. The DE requirements will be specified under the offering program’s description. Programs may wish to include in their catalog descriptions the option of pursuing designated emphases, and point students towards suggested possible emphases, according to disciplinary affinity and program history.

8. A Designated Emphasis can be disestablished by vote of the offering faculty. Faculty in the offering program should take into account the needs of students who have declared intent in their disestablishment plans.

Any change to the approved requirements of a Designated Emphasis must be re-approved by the Graduate Council.

Transition to the new requirements

Current graduate students also have “catalog rights,” which are the right to graduate under the degree requirements and degree terminology that were outlined in any catalog from the time they enter, up to the time they graduate. Students who either cannot or do not wish to be covered by the new system have the right to invoke the previous requirements as they would have applied to them.

Requests to offer a Designated Emphasis – Procedures

Departments and programs wishing to establish/offer a Designated Emphasis should submit the following documents to the Graduate Council for approval.

- Proposal for a Designated Emphasis, including a single set of requirements for all students regardless of their primary program of study. The proposal should be accompanied by a cover letter stating the rationale for offering the DE, and addressing the issue of resources required to run the DE. If no additional resources are required, this should be stated. If additional resources are required, they should be described, and the source of support for these resources should be identified. If Master’s students are allowed to complete the DE, this should be clearly stated in the proposal, and the requirements should be achievable by Master’s students.
- Letter of endorsement from the Divisional Dean, confirming resource-neutrality of the proposed DE, or a commitment of resources to support the DE sustainably.

The complete proposal should be forwarded to the Graduate Council, with a copy to the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs (VPAA).

Please direct any questions, comments, or requests to establish a Designated Emphasis to the Graduate Council Analyst, Esthela Bañuelos (esthela@ucsc.edu; 459-1317).