

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly Students Excel on Chartered Financial Analyst Exam

SAN LUIS OBISPO — A group of Cal Poly finance students in Cal Poly's Orfalea College of Business achieved outstanding success on the latest Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Level 1 Exam with a pass rate of 61 percent — well above the exam's average pass rate of 42 percent.

The CFA Charter designation is the "gold standard" for finance professionals worldwide and requires passing a series of three rigorous exams. Cal Poly students prepare to take their Level 1 exam as part of the CFA Challenge, a senior project created by Cyrus Ramezani, Finance Area chair in the Orfalea College of Business.

The vast majority of the 164,000 candidates who took the CFA Exam in the past year were industry professionals with years of experience. Only 3,500 candidates worldwide were students who participated in the CFA Challenge during the 2013-14 academic year. According to the CFA, candidates need an average of four years to pass the trio of exams. Candidates who successfully complete the series and take a strict oath of ethics are considered CFA Charterholders, a designation that affords professionals greater employment opportunities and salary potential.

"This is a testament to our college's mission to prepare career-ready graduates," said Scott Dawson, dean of the Orfalea College of Business. "These students have proven they're ready to not just enter the workforce but to also lead the field of finance from their first day at work."

Ramezani constructs the yearlong CFA Challenge to be an intense, self-directed study of financial ethics, economics, accounting and quantitative methods. Students take multiple full-length practice tests, each spanning six hours.

Since the establishment of the CFA Challenge at Cal Poly in 2007, the course has grown to include undergraduate and MBA candidates in the Orfalea College of Business. Each year, those students have outperformed the national pass rate by significant margins, and Ramezani said graduates who take the CFA Exam Levels 2 and 3 have done so with great success.

"Our students continue to perform better and better each year, and employers notice," said Ramezani. "The students' success builds a reputation for our program that can carry them to high-ranking positions in financial centers nationwide."

For information on the CFA exam, visit www.cfainstitute.org.

About the Orfalea College of Business and Cal Poly

The Orfalea College of Business prepares career-ready graduates through an unparalleled experiential business education. It is one of six academic colleges at Cal Poly, a nationally ranked, four-year, comprehensive public university. Cal Poly is a distinctive learning community offering academically focused students a hands-on educational experience through its philosophy of Learn by Doing. For more information, visit www.cob.calpoly.edu.

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