

Graduate students

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT, GRADUATE

Policy Number: 100326

Category: Academic » Enrollment

Current Policy

Policy

Graduate students are expected to pursue graduate degrees with little to no interruption, by maintaining continuous enrollment.

- Students in a Master's degree program and who do not enroll for three consecutive semesters (excluding Summer), will be considered withdrawn from the university and must reapply for admission to resume their degree program.
- Students enrolled in a Doctoral degree program are expected to be continuously enrolled each Fall and Spring term until all requirements for the degree have been fulfilled.

Even if all course requirements for a degree have been completed, students may need to use university resources (e.g. library access, lab, university facilities, etc.) to complete a required independent study or research project. For the protection of both students and the university, students must enroll during any terms, including Summer, that they use university facilities or require the professional time of faculty members. The student's advisor and/or faculty in the academic unit will decide when and how much credit a student will carry in these circumstances.

Enrollment Requirements for a Final Project, Thesis, or Dissertation

When students begin working on a Master's Final Project (689), Thesis (699), or Dissertation (799), the university expects them to enroll in these courses each semester from the time they begin this work until the degree is completed. Enrolling in these courses signifies that the student is actively writing a thesis or dissertation, or working on physical materials (e.g. a portfolio) required for their final project. If students are engaged in ancillary activities such as, but not limited to, data collection, research, or literature reviews, a different university course line (e.g. 685 - Graduate Research) might be a more appropriate reflection of their efforts and will avoid issues surrounding continuous enrollment in 689, 699, or 799. Individual graduate programs are responsible for articulating the criteria for 689, 699, or 799 and ensuring their students begin this work at the appropriate time in their degree progress.

- Students must register for a minimum of one credit in 689, 699, or 799 each Fall and Spring semester once they begin their thesis, dissertation, or final project until they graduate.
- Students utilizing university resources and/or the professional time and expertise of faculty members should enroll for at least 3 units of 689, 699, or 799, whichever is applicable.
- During the term students complete and defend their thesis (699) or dissertation (799), students must enroll for at least 1 unit or the number of units accurately reflecting the demand and use of faculty time and university resources. Programs may require students to enroll for additional units.

Students who do not have an approved leave of absence on file with the Graduate College, and wish to resume work on a thesis, dissertation, or master's final project after one or more semesters of non-enrollment or discontinuation due to lack of continuous enrollment may be required to register for any additional units of Master's Final Project (689), Thesis (699), or Dissertation (799) missed. For students that were discontinued due to lack of continuous enrollment, they also must submit a new application for admission.

Application of Continuous Enrollment Following Completion of Degree Requirements

By the last day of the term in which a student expects to graduate, students completing a Final Project must submit their work to the faculty responsible for their project. Students unable to meet this deadline will have their graduation deferred to the

next term, pending the completion of their degree requirements.

By the last day of the term in which a student wishes to graduate, students completing a thesis or dissertation must have their Oral Defense Form – Part II on file in the Graduate College and have uploaded their final approved document to ProQuest for publication. Students unable to meet this deadline will have their graduation deferred to the next term, pending the completion of their degree requirements.

If a student has missed the term deadline (last day of term) to submit their final, approved work, but have only minor revisions required by faculty (for a project) or defense committee (for a thesis or dissertation), they may complete their revisions within 10 business days following the last day of the term without required enrollment in additional credits. However, their graduation (posting of degree) will still be deferred to the next term, pending the completion of their degree requirements. A student will be required to enroll in additional credits of 689, 699, or 799 in the subsequent term if the student fails to meet this 10 business day deadline following the last day of the term.

Leave of Absence

In extenuating circumstances, graduate students may petition for an exception to the continuous enrollment policy. The petition form, [Petition for Leave of Absence](#), which is available on the [Graduate College Website](#), must be approved by the student's advisor, graduate coordinator, and/or department chair and sent to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College for final approval. The request must be filed and approved *before* the anticipated absence.

Special Circumstances

Financial Implications

Be aware that eligibility for financial aid, Veterans assistance, graduate assistantships, and university housing may be impacted by the number of units a student is enrolled. Please contact [Financial Aid](#)

Students can petition for exception

Graduate students may petition for an exception to any academic, non-grade-related, graduate regulation for which no specific appeal or petition process exists. Petitions should be submitted, in writing, to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College. When applicable, the student's advisor and department chair may endorse the petition letter. In some specific instances, utilizing the [Graduate Academic Appeal Policy](#) is more appropriate.

Students should contact the Associate Dean of the Graduate College for clarification on which process to initiate.

Related Policies

- [Catalog to Use for Academic Plan Requirements](#)