

Enrollment Status

Seniors Taking Graduate Courses

A student (other than a senior taking graduate courses with appropriate authorization; see "Seniors Taking Graduate Courses", or a student in a combined undergraduate/graduate program) must be admitted to the Graduate School to receive graduate credit for courses taken or to take courses at the 500 level or above.

Course Load

A full-time graduate student is one enrolled in courses totaling 9 (GTA or GRA) to 12 semester hours for fall and spring semesters and 6 semester hours for summer. The maximum course load for a graduate student is 13 semester hours. A student employed full-time (40 or more clock hours a week) may schedule no more than 6 hours of graduate work a semester without permission of the faculty advisor or the department chair if the student does not have an advisor. A full-time teacher working toward certification is limited to two courses a semester and a maximum of four three-semester-hour courses an academic year (nine months).

Thesis/Dissertation Requirements

Students working on a thesis or dissertation must register for thesis or dissertation credit each term in which they receive supervision or during which they are engaged in the formal preparation of the thesis/dissertation. **Students must register for 3 credit hours of either 699 or 799 in the semester that they defend.** Thesis and dissertation supervision courses are graded on satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

Continuous Registration Requirement

Students pursuing a doctoral degree must register for a minimum of 3 semester hours of graduate credit (to include dissertation credit) each fall and spring semester until all degree requirements are complete and the dissertation is complete and defended.

Credit to Audit

A student is permitted to change a course from credit to audit only during the first four weeks of classes. For students whose tuition is paid by the University through graduate assistantships or tuition scholarships, changing a course from credit to audit will require the student to reimburse the University for that course's tuition.

Graduate Non-Standard Terms for Federal VA Certification Purposes

The VA instructs institutions to enter the training time (full, $\frac{3}{4}$, etc.) in the TT/FT box for the enrollment period based on the school's academic policy when submitting the federal VA certification for graduate level terms. The VA also depends on the institutional determination of what is considered full time in these cases. The VA has an undergraduate matrix for students that is used for non-standard terms. However, this matrix does not adequately apply to graduate students in a fair and equitable manner when graduate students take courses in non-standard terms due to the weight of semester hours being affected by the number of hours the institution considers full time for graduate level coursework as compared to the undergraduate equivalent (12 hrs for UG = FT vs. 9 hrs Fall and Spring; 6 hrs Summer for GR = FT). Furthermore, the academic policy does not dive deeper into the individual parts of term in order to apply the academic policy appropriately and in an equitable manner as compared to the undergraduate counterpart and due to the way the federal VA requires institutions to certify benefits to the VA.

To bring clarity and equity to this situation, the following policy has been established and will be applied when certifying graduate students in non-standard terms that takes the academic policy of what the institution considers full time and allocates the policy's equivalent to the individual parts of the term when certifying benefits to the VA and is publishing this certification policy guidance to bring the institution into federal compliance by having this information published in the University's catalog. Otherwise, graduate students using benefits would be unfairly subjected to the lesser-weighted undergraduate hours.

Below is the University's determination for VA purposes of how the academic policy for full-time status would apply to VA students for determining rate of pursuit for VA purposes:

GRADUATE POLICY FOR FULL-TIME STATUS WITHIN A SEMESTER:

9 HRS Fall & Spring and 6 HRS Summer

VA NON-STANDARD SUMMER SCHEDULE EXAMPLE:

MAYMESTER: 3 HRS

SUM 1st 5 weeks: 3 HRS

SUM 2nd 5 weeks: 3 HRS

TOTAL HOURS: 9 HRS

(This student would be full-time for the semester, and each part of term would be full-time for that individual part of term. As a result, when submitting graduate hours to the VA, the institution will use the equivalent of how the academic policy would apply to the individual parts of term if a student was full-time for the entire term being certified in other similar cases).