

Graduation Enrollment Policy Revision

June 2022

The Graduate School has long required all students to enroll in one credit during the semester when they graduate. This has mostly affected master's students, because doctoral students are already bound by a UW System policy that requires continuous enrollment in three dissertator credits each semester until graduation. That UW System policy affecting dissertators is not altered by this revision.

Graduate students will continue to be required to enroll in at least one credit during the semester they graduate if they use significant university or faculty resources. This applies primarily to those who have completed all coursework and research credits but who have not yet completed a master's project, exam, thesis, or defense. Because these final assignments require considerable institutional and faculty investments, enrollment in at least one credit will still be required. Students will normally satisfy this requirement by enrolling in one credit of a course numbered 888, "Candidate for Degree," if their program offers it. This course does not add to the credit total, count toward to the degree, or affect the GPA. Students are assessed the equivalent of one graduate credit in fees and receive a grade of S.

However, two other groups of students will be routinely granted exceptions to this requirement to enroll in one credit during the semester when they graduate, by submitting a Request for Exception form to the Graduate School.

1. Graduate students who have completed all coursework and research credits prior to the semester in which they will graduate except for outstanding grades of "Incomplete" or "Permanent Incomplete" are not required to enroll during their semester of graduation. Because finishing an Incomplete does not require additional enrollment early in a student's career, it should not require enrollment in the final semester.
2. Graduate students who have completed all coursework and research credits prior to the semester in which they will graduate, but who have other outstanding requirements for non-credit-bearing internships, clinical placements, other kinds of off-campus fieldwork, or examinations external to UWM are not required by the Graduate School to enroll during their semester of graduation. However, they may be required to enroll by their program if the program determines that such students are still making use of significant institutional or faculty resources.

Some students may still be required to enroll during their semester of graduation for other reasons. These include:

Doctoral Students

Doctoral students with dissertator status, including international dissertators, are subject to the UW System's continuous registration requirement, which requires them

to enroll in three dissertator credits in each semester of the academic year, including their semester of graduation.

International Students

International students studying in the United States on an F1 or J1 visa are subject to federal immigration laws that require enrollment during their semester of graduation. International dissertators graduating in the summer term may be required to enroll in a minimum of one graduate credit, per federal visa requirements. These requirements will apply to most international students. International students should consult the Center for International Education with any questions about enrollment requirements.

Some students may find it beneficial to enroll in at least one credit during the semester they will graduate, even if they are not required to do so. Reasons include:

Financial Aid

Students receiving Federal Financial Aid should contact UWM's Financial Aid office to consider the implications of not enrolling. For example, students with an outstanding loan balance who do not enroll may no longer be able to defer monthly payments.

Access to UWM Facilities

Students who are not enrolled will lose access to some UWM facilities and services, such as libraries and Norris Health Center. Because some of these facilities and services are funded by tuition for the use of students, it remains appropriate for students to enroll to retain use of them. For example, a student who needs library access to finish an incomplete will need to enroll in at least one credit to retain library access. Students should consider carefully whether they would need these facilities and services during their graduation semester.