

Minimum Registration Requirements
For Graduate Students

POLICIES

General

All credit hours and course loads refer to ONLY those for which a student is receiving graduate credit AND which are applicable to the student's degree program. BUT, any maximum limit WILL include any undergraduate credit classes and graduate classes not applicable to the student's degree program.

Type of Admission

The number of hours that a student must register in each semester is not dependent upon the type of admission status of the student. Both regular and conditional admissions are subject to the same registration requirements.

Semester

Course loads for the fall and spring semesters are the same. The normal course load is **12 credit hours**; the maximum load is **15**. For tuition purposes, enrollment in 9 credit hours is considered full-time. Students may register in fewer than 12 hours with the approval of their academic advisor and in accordance with any other conditions stipulated for each department or program.

A graduate student must be registered for a minimum of **3 hours** each academic term (and summer, too, if using facilities or faculty time) in dissertation research (doctoral) and **1 hour** in thesis research (master's). This excludes non-thesis/dissertation research i.e. non-thesis or non-dissertation research will not count towards meeting minimum registration requirements.

Where an international student has an I20 which indicates that he or she is starting their program in the summer semester then the student must be enrolled full-time i.e. **9** hours.

For the summer term students may register for a maximum of **6** semester hours per session or **12** hours during an entire summer dual session. A maximum of **3** semester hours applies during the interim session. A student who is not using University facilities is not required to be registered for any classes during the summer and interim terms.

Doctoral Students and Dissertation

The Graduate School will make an exception for the doctoral student's final semester as follows.

Where the student has completed his or her dissertation and has submitted the final document to the Graduate School registration requirements are as follows:

When was the completed dissertation submitted to the Graduate School?	Registration required for the final semester in 699 dissertation research....
By 4:45pm on the last possible day for instructors to post grades for the semester before the student's final semester	0 hours
After 4:45pm on the last day to post grades, but before 4:45pm on the last day to register or add courses in the student's final semester	1 hour
After 4:45pm on the last day to register or add courses in the student's final semester	3 hours

“Completed” dissertation is one that has been successfully defended, signed off by all committee members and chairperson, and has been carefully edited before submission to the Graduate School.

Master’s Students and Thesis

The Graduate School will make an exception for the master’s student’s final semester as follows.

Where the student has completed his or her thesis and has submitted the final document to the Graduate School registration requirements are as follows:

When was the completed thesis submitted to the Graduate School?	Registration required for the final semester in 599 thesis research....
By 4:45pm on the last day to register or add courses in the student's final semester	0 hours
After 4:45pm on the last day to register or add courses in the student's final semester	1 hour

“Completed” thesis is one that has been successfully defended, signed off by all committee members and chairperson, and has been carefully edited before submission to the Graduate School.

Students receiving financial support of any kind (including employment, financial aid) may not take advantage of these exceptions, please see below for minimum registration requirements.

Continuous Registration for Doctoral Students

Once a student has met the requirements for admission to candidacy for a doctoral degree, the student is expected to pursue completion of the dissertation without interruption by enrolling each semester for at least **3** hours of dissertation research.

Continuous Registration for Master’s Students

Once a student has met the requirements for admission to candidacy for a master’s degree, the student is expected to pursue completion of the thesis without interruption by enrolling each semester for at least **1** hour of thesis research.

Minimum Hours – Other UA Policies and Regulatory Bodies

Generally, where other UA policies mandate minimum registration requirements these will apply in preference to these policies and any exceptions. For example:

- Enrollment below 5 hours (i.e. 4 or fewer hours) will disqualify any student from receiving activity, recreation, and athletic privileges (no access to Student Recreation Center) unless the student purchases the separate Activity/Recreation/Athletic privileges for a special fee (see Student Receivables – Cost of Attendance).
- Enrollment below 5 hours (i.e. 4 or fewer) will also disqualify any student from access to the Student Health Center unless the student pays the separate Health Center services fee (see Student Receivables – Cost of Attendance).
- Students who purchase the UA health insurance or who receive the GA health insurance benefit must register for a minimum of 3 graduate semester hours, no exceptions.
- UA Human Resources policies state that a department can hire any graduate student for regular hourly paid employment as long as the student is enrolled in at least 4.5 hours (see Human Resources – General Hiring Practices, Students).

Minimum hours of enrollment are subject to any state or federal regulations relating to a student's financial and citizenship situations. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. **Financial Aid:** Federal regulations mandate that a student who is receiving financial aid must be registered half-time. This means a course load of at least **4.5** hours for graduate students. Summer sessions are combined and treated as one semester for financial aid purposes. *Where a student is receiving financial aid the exception listed above regarding the graduating semester does not apply.* (Students with questions concerning financial aid regulations should contact the Student Financial Aid Office.)
2. **INS:** International students who are attending college on F1 visas must be enrolled in accordance with the institution's minimum registration requirements. International students may take advantage of the graduating semester exception listed above however the International Center will require a letter from the student's academic adviser indicating that it is the last semester. (Students should contact the Capstone International Center with regard to INS regulations.)
3. **IRS:** As long as a student is enrolled half-time, no withholding taxes will be deducted from any wages or stipend payments made to the student. Half-time means at least **3** hours in a fall or spring semester. *This is regardless of any exceptions listed above or below.*

Fellowships

Whilst no service to the University is required, fellowship recipients are expected to take no fewer than 12 graduate hours, and no more than 15. If, however the fellow also receives an assistantship then he or she may take fewer graduate hours in line with the policy for assistantship-holders, but no fewer than 9 graduate hours.

Assistantships

All graduate assistants must be full-time graduate students taking the equivalent of 12 semester hours. However, actual enrollment varies from 1 to 12 hours of classes depending upon the work load of the assistantship. Because the student is receiving funding from the university, the Graduate School stipulates a minimum level of registration for each level of work load where a student receives an assistantship during the fall and/or spring semesters.

This is summarized as follows:

FTE level	Workload (hours per week)	Minimum registered hours (required)
1.00	40	1
0.75	30	3
0.50	20	6
0.25	10	9

Exceptions to these minimum levels for graduate assistants are permitted where:

- It is the graduating semester and all degree requirements have been met. If the student fails to graduate at the end of the semester this dispensation is not allowed a second time. A minimum registration of 1 hour thesis research or 3 hours dissertation research will apply under this exception for any level of assistantship. Also, note that registration exceptions granted for graduating semester based on submission and approval of thesis or dissertation do NOT apply for an assistantship. ***This overrides special dispensation for students who have taken advantage of a reduced registration in their graduating semester based on the submission of their thesis or dissertation.***

OR

- Any semester where the student is registering in thesis/dissertation research hours only and in accordance with the department or program policies. This excludes non thesis/dissertation research. The minimum hours must be commensurate with the progress a student is expected to make on the thesis or dissertation as well as reflective of the extent to which university facilities and faculty time are invested (see Graduate Catalog Section 4.6 for guidelines for determining appropriate registration). Again, a minimum registration of 1 hour thesis research or 3 hours dissertation research will apply for any level of assistantship.

OR

- Summer and interim terms. Students are not required to register for any classes therefore they may hold an assistantship without any class registration. However if they are using university facilities and faculty time then they must register for thesis/dissertation research hours commensurate with the level of utilization (see Graduate Catalog Section 4.6 for guidelines).

BUT

- **All graduate students must register at any time in any semester for a minimum 3 hours in order to qualify for student health insurance.**