

Enrollment Requirements

Policies regarding enrollment for graduate students differ significantly from those for undergraduate students. This section defines and details policies regarding requirements for continuous enrollment and part-time versus full-time enrollment.

Continuous Enrollment

A graduate student who has completed all coursework and lacks only sitting for the comprehensive examination (non-thesis master's and educational specialist student) or completion of a master's thesis, educational specialist thesis, or doctoral dissertation must be continuously registered for a minimum of one graduate credit hour during the fall semester **and** one credit hour for either the spring **or** summer semester of each academic year (per Graduate Council, Fall 2007) until degree requirements are met. This requirement applies to students in one of the following circumstances:

- a doctoral student who has completed all coursework, passed preliminary/comprehensive examinations, and been admitted into candidacy;
- a non-thesis educational specialist student who has completed all coursework but has not taken or passed comprehensive examinations;
- a thesis-option educational specialist student who has completed all coursework, passed examinations, and is working on a thesis;
- a non-thesis master's degree student who has completed coursework but has not taken or passed comprehensive examinations; or
- a thesis-option master's degree student who has completed all coursework, passed comprehensive examinations, and is working on a thesis.

A student who fails to be continuously registered is required to register retroactively and pay tuition and registration fees for missed terms at current rates.

A student must enroll at MSU for at least one graduate credit hour for the semester in which she or he

- **takes a comprehensive examination;**
- **proposes a thesis/dissertation;**
- **defends a thesis/dissertation;**
- **submits initial and final thesis/dissertation document to the Library.**

A student who holds a graduate assistantship must maintain full-time enrollment. Other students may need to be enrolled full-time for different reasons.

Full-time Course Load

Fall and Spring

A full-time course load in fall and spring semesters is enrollment in 9-13 credit hours. A student may register for up to 16 hours by submitting to the Registrar's Office a scheduling overload form approved by the student's college dean. The form is available at http://www.provost.msstate.edu/resources/students/forms/forms/Request_for_scheduling_overload_graduate_students.pdf. This form does not need approval or processing by the Office of the Graduate School. It should be completed in the student's department and sent directly to the Registrar.

Summer

The Summer maximum course load is:

- 3 credit hours for Maymester;
- 7 hours for a 5-week summer session;
- 13 hours for the 10-week term; or
- a total of 13 hours for the entire summer semester.

A total of 6 credit hours is considered full-time Summer enrollment.

A student may not schedule courses offered on campus and in external programs concurrently whereby the maximum number of credits that may be earned in a semester or term is exceeded.

Graduate Assistantship

A student who receives an assistantship appointment is required to maintain full-time enrollment throughout the full appointment period. A student holding a half-summer graduate assistantship must be registered during the term of the assistantship. **Audit hours may not be used to satisfy the full-time enrollment requirement.** See the Graduate Assistantship section of this publication for a description of enrollment and all requirements for holding an assistantship.