HOW MANY UNITS DO I SIGN UP FOR EACH SEMESTER?

For the 2004 –2005 academic year, the Graduate School changed the policy regarding the number of units required to maintain satisfactory academic progress for regular full-time students.

The change simplifies the rules, if not the guidelines.

1. Full-time students must enroll in at least 9 units each semester. (But see exceptions below)
   > units include those for E&PS 592 Research.

2. The expected course load for fellowship awardees and research assistants is 12 units
   > but anything 9 or above is acceptable, as is 13 to 15 units.

3. The expected course load for a Teaching Assistant is 9 units.
   > but totals above 9 are acceptable, with advisor concurrence.
   > explanation should be furnished if the total is 12.

4. All courses, except 8xx level, must be taken for a grade – no audit, no pass/fail.

5. Only courses at 4xx and above will be covered by the tuition scholarship. The student must pay, at reduced rates, to take any course below 4xx. There are ways to avoid paying this fee – check with E&PS office staff.

**Exception for Students with fewer than 9 units needed to reach degree requirement:**

> Degree requirement is 72 units (PhD) or 36 units (terminal Master's)
   > These will normally be PhD students in their 4th year or Masters’ students in 4th semester.
> Sign up for N* units + Continuing Student (8xx course).
   (* N = requirement – credits taken, including “Incompletes” not yet resolved)
> The tuition letter notes this by semester as “N + CSF”.
> Note: if “N” is not the same number specified in your tuition scholarship level, see the E&PS office staff. Else you will probably get a tuition bill.

**Exception for Students who have reached the degree requirement:**

> Sign up for “CSF”, an 8xx level course, audit option, zero credit.
> You cannot take additional courses for credit without advance approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. See the E&PS office staff.

The 8xx course, for which the Continuing Student Fee (CSF) is charged, is the artifact for documenting full-time student status when 0 to 8 units are taken. The Graduate School pays this fee for Teaching Assistants and for fellowships awarded from University sources. The Graduate School does not pay this fee for Research Assistants or fellowships awarded by an external agency. But the Department pays the fee through the sixth semester for terminal M.A. students and through the 12th semester for PhD students. The student pays the fee after those time limits have been reached.

Full-time status is required for exemption from FICA tax for RA’s and TA’s, for continued deferment of student loans, and for some visa requirements. So a continuing student must register for an 8xx course each semester until all degree requirements have been completed.

It would be an excellent strategy, with advisor concurrence, for R.A.’s and fellowship awardees to take 9 units per semester rather than 12. That would allow actual courses to be taken during the fourth year (PhD students) or during the fourth semester (terminal M.A. students).

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