

General Guidelines for Signing up for Classes and Dissertation Credits  
Updated Fall 2024

**If you are Pre-Comps III:**

1. If you are taking 2 or more classes, don't sign up for any dissertation credits.
2. If you are taking 1 class, sign up for 1 dissertation credit as well. Please note: One dissertation credit will qualify you as a full-time student IF you are funded.
3. If you are only taking dissertation credits, sign up for 3 dissertation credits.
4. These rules apply to both domestic and international students. Occasionally the International Office will tell students that they must take 5 credits to be full time. This is NOT true if at least one of those credits is a dissertation credit. If you receive an "under-enrolled" notification, contact the Grad Program Assistant. Do not automatically sign up for more credits!
5. Please note: "Full Time" status for deferral of undergrad student loans is usually 4 credits rather than 3. So if you need to defer loans, make sure to sign up for at least 4 credits.

**If you are Post-Comps III:**

You must take at least 5 dissertation credits per term. You need 30 dissertation credits to graduate. You must have 30 but there is no point in paying for more than that. That is why it is best to take as few dissertation credits as you can prior to Comps III. As I just noted, once you pass Comps III, you **MUST** take at least 5 credits even if you have 30 credits already. You can always add credits but never subtract. These credits cost your PI a lot of money so try to graduate with as close to 30 dissertation credits as you can.

**Other Issues**

1. You must sign up for the dissertation section of your professor. Do NOT use the 900 generic section. If you cannot find your professor's name on the list, please contact me. For the most part, the list is in alphabetical order.
2. Make sure you sign up for a grade. Do NOT sign up for 'no credit' or 'pass/fail'. Dissertation credits appear as "IP" on your transcript which means "In Progress".
3. You may NOT drop a class after the "drop" deadline. If you do, the class or classes will not be covered by tuition remission no matter if you are a full-time student or not. It could leave you with a bill of thousands of dollars to pay!!!

**The above are general guidelines.** There are always exceptions, complications, etc. If you have questions, talk to me, not your classmate, labmate, or professor! It is my job to know the ins and outs of the rules. That is what I am here for. It is best to stop by my office so we can discuss your situation in person. My office hours are 7:30-4 PM, closed noon to 12:30 for lunch. Please allow sufficient time for a conversation. Thanks.

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