2. Continuous Enrollment for Degree-Seeking Students

All full- and part-time degree-seeking graduate students at all campus locations must maintain continuous enrollment in the Graduate School, registering for each semester, excluding summer sessions, from the time of first enrollment until all requirements for the degree are completed.

Continuous enrollment is maintained by registering for a minimum of 2 graduate credits per semester (excluding the summer).

International students who enroll for fewer than 10 credits must be approved by the Office of International Programs, in consultation with the Graduate School, prior to part-time enrollment during the academic year.

Exceptions to the continuous enrollment policy are noted in Chapter 5.A.2.b. Continuous doctoral status (CDS), explained in Chapter 5.A.2.a meets the continuous enrollment requirement.

a. Continuous Doctoral Status (CDS)

Typically, doctoral students are able to complete their doctoral studies in a timely manner after completing their coursework and preliminary requirements. However, on occasion, doctoral students who have completed their coursework, preliminary exams and most of their research requirements do not have funding to continue to register for research credits; consequently, they must leave campus to finish their dissertation work.

To meet the continuous enrollment requirement, doctoral students who have successfully completed their coursework and their preliminary exams and who DO NOT enroll for credit automatically will be placed into CDS. Students must complete their degree within three years of the date of the successful completion of their preliminary exam. CDS is not intended to replace a student's 800-research credit requirements.

i. Students in CDS are not enrolled for credit. Students should contact the Financial Aid Office if they have questions regarding their financial aid/federal loan requirements. International students must consult with the Office of International Programs before going into CDS because of their immigration status and to complete the necessary departure paperwork. Also, CDS may apply during Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT) if the student has met the CDS criteria and has not defended. Once students defend, they are no longer eligible for CDS.

ii. Doctoral students will be charged a $50 administrative fee each semester they are in CDS. CDS allows students limited access to academic resources (i.e., faculty and staff counsel) and the university libraries. Students in CDS are eligible to apply for WSU campus health services for up to one year. Payment of a health fee will be required at the time of application at the beginning of each semester. For counseling on health insurance options while in CDS status, students should contact Cougar Health Services Insurance and Billing office to speak to a patient advocate.

iii. Doctoral students who enroll for a minimum of two credits will not have to pay the CDS fee that semester. When a doctoral student who has been in CDS enrolls for credit, the $50 administrative fee for that semester will be used to offset tuition costs.

iv. Students in CDS do not have to complete a Request for Reenrollment form or pay a reenrollment fee to register for two credits to defend. It may be necessary to contact the Graduate School to activate their enrollment status.

v. Students who do not want to be in CDS have the option of dropping from the Graduate School. If they want to reenroll after being officially dropped, they will need to reapply to the Graduate School and their program. Readmission is not guaranteed.

vi. If the $50 administrative fee is not paid by the student after two consecutive semesters (excluding the summer), the student will be dropped by the Graduate School. If the student chooses to reapply, the student will need to pay the unpaid administrative fees to be readmitted.

vii. CDS may be waived for medical reasons, military service, Peace Corps service, or required internship leave. This period of leave from CDS is considered official leave and the appropriate documentation must be submitted and approved in advance of the semester the student wishes to be on leave (Chapter 5.A.6, Official Leaves of Absence and Chapter 5.A.7, Internship Leave). Graduate leave does not extend the time limitations to complete the doctoral degree (Chapter 6.E). CDS is included in the time limitations to complete a doctoral degree. Specifically, students have four calendar years from the date of successful completion of the preliminary exam to complete their degree. Consequently, students may not be in CDS status for more than seven consecutive academic semesters (excluding summer). After seven semesters, the student must enroll for 2 credits and defend their dissertation to complete their program. Note: Students who have an approved extension must enroll in a minimum of 2 research credits during one semester of their first extension. Students must be continuously enrolled in a minimum of 2 research credits during fall and spring semesters of their second or third extensions (unless they complete their degree before the extension expires). Students who are not in compliance with the CDS policy may be dropped from their program.

b. Exceptions to Continuous Enrollment

Typically, degree-seeking graduate students enroll in credits every semester until degree completion; however, sometimes circumstances are such that degree-seeking students are unable to enroll for credits. Such circumstances may include illness, family issues, financial need, work, or other obligations. The exceptions to continuous enrollment discussed in this section address circumstances in which a degree-seeking student must be away from their studies and cannot enroll for credits. These students must complete the appropriate graduate leave or internship leave paperwork, obtain approval from their faculty advisor and the chair or director (in the academic program, department, or school), and submit the paperwork to the Graduate School in advance of the semester they will be away. Official leaves of absence, internship leave status, and absences not approved under this policy are included in the time limits to complete a degree.

i. Graduate Leave of Absence. Degree-seeking students in active status and in good academic standing who must be away from campus for reasons such as medical issues, family obligations, job obligations, military service, and Peace Corps service, and who cannot maintain continuous enrollment in any given semester, may apply for an official graduate leave of absence. See Chapter 5.A.6 for additional information and procedures. Only graduate leave for medical reasons, military service, and Peace Corps service is available to doctoral students in CDS status. Students who are approved for graduate leave while in CDS status will not be charged the $50 administrative fee.

ii. Internship Leave. Degree-seeking students who wish to go on an internship approved by their program and who do not need to register for credits for the internship may apply for internship leave status. See Chapter 5.A.7 for information and procedures. Only internship leave required by the student's program is available to doctoral students in CDS status. Students who are approved for internship leave while in CDS status will not be charged the $50 administrative fee.