

Maintaining Full Time Student Status & Registration FAQ

What is full time student status?

All graduate students need to maintain full time status, which is defined by the Graduate School as either being enrolled in 9 credit hours OR being enrolled in dissertation completion hours (3 credit hours of ENGL or CMPL 994).

If I am teaching, do I still need to take 9 credit hours?

If you have a teaching contract at UNC Chapel Hill, you may submit a Waiver of Hours form which allows you to take an underload of 6 credit hours for the semesters you are teaching. You are eligible to take 9 credit hours and teach, in which case you do not need to fill out the Waiver of Hours form; however, it is CRUCIAL that if you are taking only 6 credit hours that you submit the Waiver of Hours form within the first week of class (the internal due date in the English & Comparative Literature department is either by or before the first day of classes). Failure to submit the Waiver of Hours form has severe consequences. According to the Graduate School, students who are under-enrolled and who do not submit a Waiver of Hours form will:

***Be ineligible to hold a teaching assistantship – which means if you have a teaching contract (for example with the Department of English and Comparative Literature), you will not be able to continue teaching**

***Be ineligible for tuition remission – which means if you are an out of state student, you will be responsible for the financial difference between in and out of state tuition**

***Be ineligible for tuition and health insurance through UNC Chapel Hill**

***Potentially be in jeopardy of impacting financial aid or fellowship awards that require full time student status**

In order to ensure that none of the above happens, you must turn in the Waiver of Hours form by or before the first day of classes if you are taking less than 6 credit hours– so even if you think you might take an additional 3 credit hours, you may want to fill out the Waiver of Hours form and turn it in to be on the safe side. Waiver of Hours forms should be submitted to Sharon Brinson. You can find the Waiver of Hours form on the department website under the grad tab and under the general “forms” tab or click on this link:

<http://englishcomplit.unc.edu/sites/default/files/waiverhr.pdf>

OK, you've scared me about the Waiver of Hours form – is there a procedure to turn it in?

Yes. First you should only turn in the Waiver of Hours form once you have registered for classes. This means that your schedule is complete. Unfortunately, due to the bureaucracy that we have to work with, you do not have the luxury of shopping for classes. We do not advise you to register for 4 classes with the intention of dropping 2: that is a BAD idea. Make a final decision about which courses you will take, whether here or at Duke/NC State and then register for those classes. Once you have registered (this means potentially waiting to get confirmation from Duke/NC State) then you can turn in the Waiver of Hours.

The Waiver should be printed out and you will fill it out and turn in a hard copy to the Graduate Student Services Specialist. If the Graduate Student Services Specialist is out, you can submit it to the department receptionist but you will need to sign the checklist that affirms that you have physically turned your form into a department staff person.

You then need to receive a confirmation email from the the Graduate Student Services Specialist—then and only then can you be assured that your Waiver has been processed. If you turned in a form but did not receive a confirmation email from the Graduate Student Services Specialist within 2 days you should email the department to confirm that your form has been processed.

When should I enroll in ENGL/CMPL 994—dissertation completion hours?

Once you have completed all your course requirements, you should register for 3 credit hours of 994 with your dissertation advisor (or chair for the Comparative Literature PhD students—English & Comparative literature use different nomenclature for the faculty member directing your dissertation). If you have fulfilled all but 1 course requirement, you may be eligible to enroll in 994 – please consult with your DGS. Continue to register for 3 credit hours of 994 through completion of your dissertation.

Can I register for an underload of 1 class per semester if I've got class credit that I can transfer in?

No—the Graduate School will only allow students to take an underload of 6 credit hours per semester if you fill out a Waiver of Hours form (see the second FAQ) and if you have a teaching contract. The one exception to this is if you have only one course requirement left to fulfill. You may then enroll in ENGL/CMPL 994 since students who are in this situation are often also studying for their comprehensive exams, making 994 an appropriate course to enroll in.

When should I register for classes?

Registration for the fall semester typically opens in early November, and registration for the spring semester typically opens in early April. You should enroll in classes as soon as registration opens—and we will follow up with you in early December/mid-April to ensure that you are registered for a full course load or 994.

What if I want to add a class late or drop a class—what is the add/drop period?

Students can add or drop classes in Connect Carolina as soon as registration opens and throughout the first week of classes (the first 5 days of the semester). After the first 5 days of the semester are over, students can continue to add or drop classes BUT, they must get permission from the instructor of the graduate seminar in email form, and this email message must be sent to the graduate student service's specialist, Sharon Brinson (brinsons@email.unc.edu). If you wish to drop a class after the first 5 days of the semester, you will need to go through Sharon Brinson to do this as well. So to summarize: you can add a class or drop a class at will in the first week of classes, and you can continue to drop or add a class in the second week, but you will need permission of the instructor emailed to Sharon Brinson if you are trying to add a course. After 10 days or 2 weeks into the semester, students will not be able to add or drop classes; therefore, it is critical that students establish their course schedules in the first week of class. In particular, it is critical that students maintain full time status either by enrolling in 9 credit hours or taking 6 credit hours and turning in the Waiver of Hours form (see the second FAQ entry).

OK, even though you reminded me many times, I forgot to turn in my Waiver of Hours form—are you sure I can't turn it in late?

Yes—we are sure. Please see the second FAQ entry. The graduate school has made it clear to us that they are not accepting late Waiver of Hours forms under any circumstances and that there are severe consequences for not turning it in on time. Please follow the internal deadline and hand in your Waiver of Hours form by or before the first day of classes. You can find the Waiver of Hours form on the department website, <http://englishcomplit.unc.edu/sites/default/files/waiverhr.pdf>, and it should be turned into the Graduate Student Services Administrator in hard copy form—see the third FAQ entry.