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THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY  
**RUTGERS**

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To: Provost Newark  
Provost Camden  
New Brunswick Graduate Program Directors  
New Brunswick Deans

From: Philip Furmanski



Subject: Normalizing Full-Time Status for Research Doctoral Students

This memorandum describes a new process for establishing full-time status for research doctoral students who are *de facto* full-time, i.e., those that are completely committed to work on their graduate degrees but who register for fewer credits than needed to qualify as full-time.

Research universities typically have such a mechanism to recognize the reality that many students are fully engaged in graduate study beyond coursework but do not require nine or more credits in their formal registration. These include students who no longer require large numbers of research credits but continue to work on their dissertation research, pre-candidacy students preparing for qualifying examinations, and doctoral students engaged in study or research abroad. Such a mechanism will also accommodate students who require full-time status for loan, visa, and other purposes and reduce the cost of supporting students on external grants or fellowships without jeopardizing that status.

#### GUIDELINES FOR FULL-TIME CERTIFICATION

Students who are *de facto* full-time doctoral students, but whose programs do not require enrollment for at least nine credits may be certified as full-time enrollees if the following conditions are met:

- I. The student is devoting the preponderance of his or her efforts to the completion of the doctoral program.
- II. The student is not employed for a total of more than 20 hours in other activities.

- III. The student has completed all formal coursework; or the student has completed at least 75% of all formal coursework and has submitted a plan to complete the work in a timely manner.
- IV. The student's registration for fewer than nine credits is academically appropriate for one or more of the following reasons:
  - A. The student is studying for the qualifying examination.
  - B. The student is preparing a dissertation proposal.
  - C. The student is conducting dissertation research.

Certifications will not normally be approved for more than five years for doctoral students. Exceptions will be rare and must be approved by the Dean, who will then make a request to the Registrar.

All students certified as full-time must pay the full-time student fee, except for those who are away from campus and registering for one research credit or pre-candidacy doctoral students who qualify for matriculation continued, in which cases the part-time fee will be charged.

#### PROCEDURE

Students must request certification from the Director of the graduate program in which they are enrolled. The Director, in turn, must complete a request form (see attached) and sign it (no substitutions). The form is then submitted to the Registrar who will mark the student's record as either "full-time in residence", indicating that the student will be responsible for the full-time student fee, or "full-time, not in residence", in which case the student will be responsible for the part-time student fee. These indicators will cause the student to appear as a full-time student for all other purposes. Students will remain responsible for enrolling for the minimal academic credit requirements already in place.

Att.

## DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR FULL-TIME CERTIFICATION

Students who are *de facto* full-time doctoral students, but whose programs do not require enrollment for at least nine credits may be certified as full-time enrollees if the following conditions are met:

- V. The student is devoting the preponderance of his or her efforts to the completion of the doctoral program.
- VI. The student is not employed for a total of more than 20 hours in other activities.
- VII. The student has completed all formal coursework; or the student has completed at least 75% of all formal coursework and has submitted a plan to complete the work in a timely manner.
- VIII. The student's registration for fewer than nine credits is academically appropriate for one or more of the following reasons:
  - A. The student is studying for the qualifying examination.
  - B. The student is preparing a dissertation proposal.
  - C. The student is conducting dissertation research.

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**Request for Full-time Registration  
Graduate School – New Brunswick**

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name\_\_\_\_\_

*Last* *First*

Degree Program\_\_\_\_\_

I certify that the above named student

- is not employed for a total of more than 20 hours a week in other activities;
- is devoting the preponderance of his or her efforts to the completion of the degree program;
- has completed all formal coursework or has completed at least 75% of all formal coursework and has submitted a plan to complete the work in a timely manner.

I recommend full-time status for the above named student, assuming registration of at least \_\_\_\_ credits in the \_\_\_\_ (Fall or Spring or both) term in \_\_\_\_ (year) for the following academic reasons: (check all that apply)

- The student is studying for the qualifying examinations;
- The student is preparing a dissertation proposal;
- The student is conducting dissertation research;
- The student will not be in residence in the tri-state area (must also check one of the above).

Name of Graduate Program

Director\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Graduate Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_

Students in research doctoral programs may be certified as full time for no more than five years. All students certified as full time must pay the full-time student fee, except for students who are away from campus and registering for one research credit or pre-candidacy doctoral students who qualify for matriculation continued.