

GRADUATE PLACEHOLDER POLICY

Graduate placeholder courses are available to graduate students in certain situations where their enrolled unit load does not represent the amount of work they are required to complete toward their graduate degree within a given term. There are several different placeholder courses available to students in the situations shown below.

Graduate students needing placeholder units to supplement their enrollment should contact their program director to be added to the permission list so they can register themselves for the course before the end of the Add/Drop schedule adjustment period.

Placeholder unit courses will be graded SX/UX (count as an attempt, but no credit is earned). These units will be reported to the National Student Loan Clearinghouse so the student will be considered half-time or full-time at Towson (based on our definitions); and if they have previous federal student loans, they will not go into repayment.

Placeholder Types:

DISSERTATION /THESIS/CAPSTONE PROJECT COURSES

Graduate students who are completing a dissertation, thesis or capstone project as part of their program are required to enroll in a Thesis/Dissertation/Project course. Typically, students in master's programs complete one term (6 units) or two terms (3 units each) of thesis or project courses. Students in doctoral programs complete between 12 – 24 units of dissertation (or 7 units of thesis) spread over multiple terms. The classes are graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory or In Progress, and will qualify for additional units to achieve half or full-time status. The students will be eligible for a placeholder class (CGSR G92 for 3 units) that is non-billable and ***eligible for financial aid***.

Graduate students who need more than one or two terms to finish their dissertation/thesis/capstone project will be required to enroll in a 1-unit **Continuum** each term until it is complete. The continuum class will be graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. Students in a continuum class will be eligible for a placeholder class (CGSR G93) that is non-billable and ***eligible for financial aid***. This class will be variable (1 – 5 units) and **may be given a maximum of two times** in the student's career (starting fall 2012 and forward). The student, in conjunction with the Program Director, will determine how many units are appropriate.

INTERNSHIPS

Graduate students completing an internship as part of their program are required to enroll in an internship or practicum course. Units assigned to these full-time internships vary between 3 – 9 units depending on the program. Internship students with less than 6 units in total enrollment will qualify for additional units to achieve half-time status. Students will be eligible for a placeholder class (CGSR G94) that is non-billable and ***eligible for financial aid***. This class will be variable (1 – 3 units) and the student, in conjunction with the Program Director, will determine how many units are needed to achieve half-time status.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS/TEACHING ASSISTANTS/RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

All students receiving a 10-hour or 20-hour per week graduate assistantship will qualify for additional units to achieve full-time load. For the purposes of this information, the term graduate assistant refers to graduate, teaching or research assistants. The additional units will be in the form of a placeholder class that is non-billable and ***not eligible for financial aid***. Graduate assistants who work 20 hours per week will be eligible for the CGSR G90 class for 3 units. Graduate assistants who work 10 hours per week will be eligible for the CGSR G91 class for 6 units. *Please note:* to qualify for financial aid, the student must have at least 6 units (masters) or 3 units (doctoral) of actual coursework (the placeholder class will not count).

SPECIAL NOTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:

Graduate international students on F-1/J-1 visas must be enrolled full-time to maintain their visa status. Placeholder classes will count toward their full-time load under the circumstances defined above. Individual programs cannot define full-time status differently. International students in their final term, or those with an appropriate medical reason, may be eligible for reduced course load permission. Appropriate documentation must be submitted to the International Student & Scholar office and written permission received before less than full time enrollment can occur.

GRADUATE PLACEHOLDER COURSE INFORMATION

Course	Title	Units	Counts Toward Load/Level*?	Eligible for Financial Aid?	Counts for Graduation?
CGSR G90	Assistantship - Full Time	3	Yes	No	No
CGSR G91	Assistantship - Part Time	6	Yes	No	No
CGSR G92	Thesis/Project/Dissertation	3	Yes	Yes	No
CGSR G93	Continuum - Load Units	1-5	Yes (2 term, max)	Yes	No
CGSR G94	Internship/Practicum/Clinical	1-3	Yes	Yes	No

*Load/level – Based on load/level (number of units enrolled), students are reported as half-time or full-time by Towson to the National Student Loan Clearinghouse. Students with at least a half-time status will not go into loan repayment if they have outstanding federal student loans. Load/level is also reported on Enrollment Verifications which are used for car insurance, housing contracts, etc. Please note that under the Affordable Care Act, health insurance no longer requires any enrollment for offspring up to 26 years old.