

Chapter 1: Academic Eligibility

Basic Qualifications for Employment Eligibility

Graduate students must meet the basic qualifications as follows:

Full-Time Enrollment

Graduate students must be registered full-time (a minimum of 12 units) to be employed above 25% time during the academic year (Fall-Spring quarter). Students registered and in less than 12 units are eligible for 25% time appointments upon department approval.

Good Academic Standing

- Meet Department standards including a satisfactory spring evaluation
 - Maintain a GPA of 3.0 in upper-division and graduate course work
 - Must not have accumulated more than a total of eight units of F and/or U grades overall
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Support Time Limits

Students must be within the time limits for graduate student financial support (employment, fellowship, etc.). **Graduate students should not be extended in UCPath beyond the quarter break following their PCTL or SUTL expiration.** Once the student has advanced to candidacy, or the support time limit has been extended, you may extend their employment. The Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs maintains online pre-candidacy and support time limit notices for students with time limits expiring this spring and upcoming academic year. Please be sure to review these time limit notices before processing or approving employment for a graduate student. You may view a complete time limit report on the [Student Database](#), under the Reports tab.

- Ph.D./D.M.A. Degree aim: Every student has two time limits and a TA/Associate limit affecting employment/support eligibility: The pre-candidacy time limit (PCTL), the support time limit (SUTL), and the 18 quarter limit. The "expiration date" is defined as the last day of the quarter
 - PCTL: A student must advance to candidacy prior to the expiration of the pre-candidacy time limit. If a student does not meet this requirement, the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs Academic Affairs Unit puts a "hold" on the student's record preventing further enrollment and registration. When a PCTL expires and the student has not advanced to doctoral candidacy, the student is not eligible for employment beyond the quarter break following the PCTL expiration date.
 - SUTL: The support time limit identifies the quarter through which a graduate student may receive any payment from university funds (on-campus employment, fellowship, etc.). When a SUTL expires, the student is not eligible for employment beyond the quarter break following the SUTL expiration date.
 - 18 Quarter Limit: A student may not be employed as a Teaching Assistant (TA) and/or Associate for more than 18 quarters. Summer TA and/or Associate employments do not count towards the 18 quarter limit. Please note this is a separate and distinct limit, and any extension granted to SUTLs does not apply to the 18 quarter TA/Associate limit.
 - **18-Quarter Teaching Limit Extension:** 3-quarter extension permissible for students matriculated in COVID-impacted quarters
 - M.A., M.Eng., and M.S. degree aim: Eligible for 7 quarters of employment or other support.
 - M.F.A. and M.P.I.A. degree aim: Eligible for 10 quarters of employment or other support.
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Language Skills

International graduate students who are non-native speakers of English must be certified as having requisite language skills before they can serve as Teaching Assistants. This English language policy does not apply to a student who serves as a TA which is conducted in his/her native language. For further information, contact the [English Language Program for International Instructors \(ELP-ii\)](#).

Eligibility Topics

Academic Home Department Support Policy

Each Academic Department at UC San Diego has established its own support policy for all graduate students registered in the Department. This includes the establishment of a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) step level(s) and appointment percentage of time allowed during the academic year and summer. A hiring department must contact the student's Academic Home Department to obtain pre-approval of employment and to adhere to the individual Department's support policy.

Academic Year Appointments

US Citizens and Permanent Residents

Graduate students who are US Citizens and Permanent Residents are eligible to work up to 50% during the academic year. During the summer, 100% employment is allowed (depending on the student's Academic Department support policy) if the student intends to enroll full time Fall quarter and meets all other eligibility criteria. The maximum appointment percentage for Graduate Student Researchers is 49.99% during the academic year.

International Students

An international student in F-1 or J-1 status is restricted to on-campus employment of a maximum of 50% time (20 hours per week) during the academic year. **No exceptions are permitted to this rule.** During the summer, 100% employment is allowed (depending on the student's Academic Department's support policy) if the student intends to enroll full time Fall quarter and meets all other eligibility criteria. Contact the [Global Education Division](#) with questions.

Academic Warning and Dismissal Letters

Academic warning and/or dismissal letters are issued by the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs Academic Affairs and are available to the student and Departments in the [Online Student Database](#). The Dean of the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs usually allows the student one quarter to be removed from academic probation while at the same time retain eligibility for campus appointment.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) was intended to enrich the academic experience of graduate students and be complementary to the academic program. GEPA prioritizes the academic progress of students seeking higher degrees and does not approve graduate academic employment, CPT appointments, or a combination of the two, at more than 50% effort during the academic year and over 100% during the summer periods.

Enrollment and Registration

Graduate students must be registered full-time (a minimum of 12 units) to be employed above 25% time during the academic year. Students registered and in less than 12 units are eligible for 25% time appointments upon department approval.

Fiscal Year Appointments

Effective June 1, 2020 graduate students employed on graduate academic titles may be appointed for more than one fiscal year at a time. Appointments should only be entered into the payroll system if they have been approved by the Academic Home Department and hiring department.

Academic Student Employees (ASEs) should only be entered into the payroll system if they have been formally appointed to the assignment.

Hiring Violations

It is considered a hiring violation to employ a student who does not meet all eligibility criteria. The Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs will notify a department of the eligibility issue when they become known.

Incoming International Students

International Center guidelines state that in general, an international student on F-1 or J-1 status cannot enter the U.S. more than 30 days prior to the program start date listed on the I-20 or DS2019.

Leave of Absence

A graduate student on an academic Leave of Absence (LOA) may not receive any payment from the university (employment, fellowship, etc.) during the quarter(s) while on Leave and must be terminated in UCPath. A graduate student who is returning from a LOA, and is within their support time limit, is eligible for employment during the summer or quarter break preceding the quarter of return from a LOA.

New Admit

A graduate student who has been officially admitted to graduate study (the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs has issued the Certificate of Admission) may be employed as a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR), Reader, or Tutor during the summer (summer being defined as the first day after spring quarter ends) or quarter-break before the first quarter of registration. For example, a fall quarter admit may be employed during the summer, before their first quarter of enrollment, as a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR). In order to hire a new admit as a TA, the student must have already started their graduate academic program.

An international student on F-1 or J-1 status cannot enter the U.S. more than 30 days prior to the program start date listed on the I-20 or DS2019.

Percent Time

UC graduate student employment policy states that a full-time graduate student may be employed a maximum of 50% time (20 hours per week) during the academic year and up to 100% time (40 hours per week) during the summer months. The summer is defined as the day after the Spring quarter ends and the day before the Fall quarter begins.

Each Academic Department at UC San Diego has established its own support policy for all graduate students registered in the Department. This includes the establishment of a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) step level(s) and appointment percentage of time allowed during the academic year and summer. A funding source must contact the student's Academic Department to obtain pre-approval of employment and to adhere to the individual Department's support policy.

Readmit

A graduate student who has been readmitted, and within the support time limit, is eligible for employment during the summer or quarter break preceding the quarter of readmission.

Short Work Breaks

During the summer and academic year, there are continuing graduate students who are engaged in research and studies towards their degrees but do not have salaried appointments such as Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) or Teaching Assistant (TA). To accommodate this situation, graduate academic titles may be put on Short Work Break (SWB) in UCPath. This is to bridge students between appointments in UCPath. Students on LOA are not eligible for SWB, their UCPath appointment must be terminated.

Effective AY 2021-2022

SWB cannot be extended longer than four (4) months at a time in UCPath.

Spring Evaluations

Graduate Council policy requires that Doctoral and MFA students be evaluated every spring. A satisfactory evaluation on file in the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs is necessary for future support. The following students are exempt from an annual spring evaluation:

1. A student advancing to Doctoral or M.F.A. candidacy during winter or spring
2. A student on an approved leave of absence during spring. (A student on leave during the spring quarter must have an evaluation completed no later than the end of the first quarter of return).

The Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs Dean strongly urges faculty to complete evaluations by the end of the spring quarter so that student registration for the future is not jeopardized. The Graduate Council advises that any requests for exceptions to policy for time limits or support will not be approved unless a current evaluation is on file.

Students in Staff Titles

Graduate students may not take on employment in a staff title. Please contact the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs if you have questions about this policy.

UC San Diego career staff who become graduate students and take an appointment in a graduate academic title may need to convert their academic pay from monthly to bi-weekly. Please contact the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs for assistance in [converting their pay](#).

Summer and Quarter Break Employment

A U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident who receives a terminal degree, and is eligible for support, can be employed, on certain titles, through the quarter-break after graduation provided the student continues to be actively engaged in graduate student research. The summer is considered to be the quarter-break after spring quarter.

An international student (F-1 or J-1 visa) who has a dissertation/thesis defense date or date of comprehensive exam during a summer or quarter break, and is eligible for support, can be employed as a student through the last day of that respective summer or quarter-break. International students who are defending their thesis or taking a comprehensive exam during the summer may not continue employment after the start of the Fall quarter. International students eligible for on-campus employment are encouraged to connect with [ISPO](#) to make sure their immigration documents and employment authorization are in order.

During the summer, 100% employment is allowed (depending on the student's Academic Department support policy) if the student is registered full time for the Spring Quarter prior and/or intends to enroll full time in the upcoming Fall quarter and meets all other eligibility criteria.

- [Spring TA with GSR at 100% During the Summer](#)
- [GSR at 100% During the Summer](#)

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