

DISSERTATION RESEARCH/WRITING STUDENT GROUP INFORMATION

The University of Michigan Certification of Dissertation Research/Writing form is used to place Candidate-level international and domestic doctoral students in an optional, student-initiated student group. In no way does Dissertation Research/Writing replace enrollment (fee hours, registration for dissertation defense) or Detached Study (student loan deferments, insurance and other benefits). The Dissertation Research/Writing Student Group was created to assist International “F” and “J” Candidate-level doctoral students to retain their “good” status with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) during the term(s) they are not registered in coursework or on Detached Study. “Out of Status” students face possible deportation.

SEVIS regulations provide that physical presence of the students be verified. By limiting acceptance/renewal of the Dissertation Research/Writing form to hand delivery by the student, this area of the regulations can be satisfied.

Who Is Eligible? Candidate-level doctoral students in good academic standing in their program. Students (international or domestic) cannot be put into the Dissertation Research Writing Group status during Rackham's doctoral degree grace period.

What are the benefits?

- All Candidate-level students can take a copy of the completed form (with all signature sets) to the Library, Circulation Services room 104, and maintain their University Library privileges during the period of Dissertation Research/Writing.
- Students will maintain the Basic Computing Package (BCP) privileges.
- Students can take a copy of the completed form to the Parking Services as proof of Graduate Student Status in order to purchase a Graduate Student parking permit.
- International students would maintain their “good” status with the DHS.

What are the drawbacks?

- Domestic students who use the Dissertation Research/Writing group, rather than Detached Study would not be eligible for student loan deferment during their approved time period.
- No student would be able to receive a letter from the Certification department within the Registrar’s Office stating that they are currently enrolled.
- Students are not eligible to use the CCRB/intramural sports centers. They would need to purchase passes to use the facilities.
- Students in this designation may not hold a GSI, SGRA or GSSA appointment, and may not work at the University unless they apply for and received permission from Rackham OARD.

What is the Approved Time Period? Students may elect to be placed in this group for up to three full terms (e.g. Fall 03, Winter 04, Spring/Summer 04) with one form. This is renewable for another three terms at the discretion of the department, if the student has made progress in their Research/Writing, and the graduate school. Students may renew for additional terms, but their progress should be closely scrutinized by the department prior to approval. No student should be allowed more than nine terms of Dissertation Research/Writing. Students cannot register in coursework or be placed on Detached Study during “Dissertation Research/Writing”. If the student finishes up their work and is ready to defend, a new form must be submitted changing the terms of their Dissertation Research/Writing so they are eligible to register.

Who accepts and signs the forms? The department graduate advisor or chair. This form must be hand-carried by the student to the department, identification should be produced by the student. Please note: In the address area of the form, the student cannot list a P.O. Box or Box address. International Students must, under Federal guidelines, report their residence address to the DHS, not a postal box. If the student has included a box in the address, please have them correct the information immediately.

What is the next step? Once the department has received and approved the form, send the form (make sure both the student and departmental signatures are completed) to Academic Records and Dissertations, 0120 Rackham Bldg.

Upon receipt of the form, the Registrar’s Office will place the student into the “Dissertation Research/Writing” student group. When SEVIS reporting is electronically sent to the DHS, those students will be considered “in status”. For the terms selected, the student will not be eligible for enrollment.