

Full-Time Equivalency for PhD Students taking Preliminary or Qualifying Exams

If a graduate international student will not be enrolled full time during an academic term yet the academic department considers him/her to be full time, while the student prepares for or take preliminary or qualifying exams, the U-M International Center (IC) may authorize a Full Time Equivalency (FTE) for this student. This FTE allows the U-M International Center (IC) to report full-time enrollment to SEVIS to maintain the student's F1 status.

- Full Time Equivalency is for the purpose of maintaining immigration status only. You may not be considered an active student for other purposes, such as loans, for example.
- Rackham requires that all students register for at least one credit.

Who Can Qualify

An FTE may be granted in the following circumstances:

- A graduate student completing all formal course work during the current term. Upon completion of formal course work, the student will prepare for or take the preliminary exam or qualifying exam.
- A graduate student has already completed all formal course work but is currently preparing for preliminary exam or qualifying exam.

Requirements

A signed letter from the academic advisor or department is required. The letter must be on letterhead and must state the following information:

- That the student is considered to be full time by the department.
- What the student will be doing during the term of FTE authorization.
- The number of credits for which the student will register during the term of FTE authorization.

Please be advised that the [Full Time Equivalency Request Form](#) [1] along with the required documents listed on the request form must be submitted to an International Student Advisor during [advising hours](#) [2].

The FTE must be received by the U-M International Center (IC) by the end of the **drop/add period of EACH TERM**. A student who drops below a full course of study without prior approval of a Designated School Official (DSO) is considered out of status.

Source URL: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/fulltime-equivalency-phd>

Links

[1] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/FTReq.pdf>

[2] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/advising-hours>