

POLICY CONSULTATION REPORT

TO: The University Community

DATE: October 29, 2024

FROM: Adam Wingate, Associate Registrar & Director, Records and Scheduling

SUBJECT: Registration and Course Selection Policy Amendments

BACKGROUND:

The Registration and Course Selection Policy establishes the requirements regarding registration and course selection for undergraduate and graduate students. The proposed amendments are specifically focused on time-status rules for graduate students.

Prior to 2023, the Ontario Council of Graduate Studies (OCGS) endorsed a '10-hour rule' which capped the number of hours graduate students employed by the University could work at 510 hours per calendar year, 255 hours per term, or an average of 10 hours per week. This is enshrined in the Ontario Tech graduate funding guidelines, as well as the PSAC collective agreement. The University has abided by the 10-hour rule since our inception. Last year, the OCGS moved away from the 10-hour rule and removed any language of work hour caps from provincial documents. The Council of Ontario Universities (COU) indicates that many universities have adopted this change for reasons of increased living costs, static graduate funding and an increase in professional degree programs. In lieu of this rule, the University would simply adhere to Canadian labour standards. Ontario Tech's Senior Academic Team (SAT) supported this change in September 2023; the proposed amendment to the Registration and Course Selection Policy reflects this change.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES:

A short summary of revisions to date are as follows:

- Removed clause 20.4(d): "if employed by the University, work no more than an average of 10 hours per week at diversionary employment while they are registered as a full-time student" and associated explanatory bullets.

OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT:

- The Office of the Registrar is seeking community comments on proposed amendments. Comments submitted will be considered by the Policy Owner.
- You may submit your feedback and recommendations for any of the posted policy instruments using the [Policy Instrument Feedback Form](#).

NEXT STEPS:

The consultation and approval path for the Policy will be as follows:

- Online Consultation: November 1, 2024 – November 15, 2024
 - Undergraduate Studies Committee Deliberation: November 19, 2024
 - Graduate Studies Committee Deliberation: November 26, 2024
 - Academic Council for Approval: January 28, 2024
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SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

- Registration and Course Selection Policy – Redline



Classification Number	ACD 1508
Framework Category	Academic
Approving Authority	Academic Council
Policy Owner	Registrar
Approval Date	DRAFT FOR APPROVAL
Review Date	January 2026
Supersedes	Registration and Course Selection Policy, February 25, 2020; Academic Regulations – Undergraduate Academic Calendar 2016-2017, Academic Regulations, Graduate Academic Calendar 2019-20

Registration and Course Selection Policy

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this Policy is to outline the University’s Registration and Course selection Framework.

DEFINITIONS

2. For the purposes of this Policy the following definitions apply:

“**Academic Transcript**” means the complete report of a student's academic record.

“**Academic Year**” means the period from September 1 to August 31.

“**Credit Hours**” means a measure used to reflect the relative weight of a given Course toward the fulfilment of degree requirements. Unless otherwise indicated, a Course normally has a Credit Hour value of three.

“**Corequisite**” means a Course that must be taken concurrently with the Course for which it is required.

“**Course**” means a unit of work in a particular subject normally extending through one Semester or Session, the completion of which carries credit toward the requirements of a degree or diploma.

“**Examination**” means a form of testing intended to assess the level of students' knowledge, ability, skills, comprehension, application, analysis, and/or synthesis of the subject matter in a Course of study. This includes, but is not limited to in-person, online, take-home, practical, and laboratory Examinations. This does not include doctoral candidacy, master’s or doctoral thesis examinations.

“**Grade Point Average (GPA)**” means the weighted average of the grade points awarded on the basis of academic performance during a single Semester.

“**Prerequisite**” means a Course that must be successfully completed prior to commencing a second Course for which it is required.

“Program” means a complete set and sequence of Courses, combination of Courses, and/or other units of study, research and practice, the successful completion of which qualifies the candidate for a formal credential (degree with or without major; diploma), provided all other academic and financial requirements are met.

“Semester” means sixty days of lectures and a final Examination period.

“Session” means a period of approximately six consecutive weeks in the summer Semester consisting of 30 days of lectures and a final Examination period. The first half of summer Semester is designated as spring Session; the second half is designated as summer Session.

“Time-Status” means the declared registration status of a graduate student. Graduate students can be registered full-time or part-time regardless of the number of courses in which they are registered. Time-status means full or part-time status for an Undergraduate student, which is defined by the student’s registered course load.

SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

3. This Policy applies to all Course selections for undergraduate and graduate students.
4. The Registrar, or successor thereof, is the Policy Owner and is responsible for overseeing the implementation, administration and interpretation of this Policy.
5. The Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is responsible for overseeing the implementation, administration and interpretation of this Policy as they pertain to graduate students.

POLICY

The following outlines the requirements regarding registration and Course selection for undergraduate and graduate students.

6. Course Selection

- 6.1. Requirements for Programs of study are listed in the faculty or Program sections of the academic calendar. Students should become familiar with the Program and/or degree requirements and plan their Programs accordingly.
- 6.2. Academic advice is available to undergraduate students who experience difficulty when selecting Courses.
- 6.3. All candidates pursuing a graduate degree or diploma shall enrol in an advanced course of study.
- 6.4. Graduate students must consult with their graduate program director, faculty advisor or research supervisor as part of the planning process.
- 6.5. All Courses in the student's Program must be approved by the graduate program director.
- 6.6. Graduate students may take graduate Courses outside their Program with permission from the student's supervisor (if applicable), graduate program director for the Program and the graduate program director for the Course. Graduate

students may be charged fees in addition to their regular Program fee for such Courses.

- 6.7. Graduate students cannot take Courses for credit in addition to the Course requirements for their graduate Program.
- 6.8. Not all Courses are offered in any one Semester, Session, or Academic Year. Elective offerings may vary from Semester to Semester.

7. Prerequisites and Corequisites

- 7.1. Some Courses have Prerequisites or Corequisites.
- 7.2. An undergraduate student may have Prerequisites and Corequisites waived with the permission of the faculty.
- 7.3. A graduate student may have Prerequisites or Corequisites waived with the permission of the graduate program director.
- 7.4. Any student who requests such a waiver is responsible to ensure that they are adequately prepared to proceed with the level of study required in the Course.
- 7.5. Inadequate preparation is not a basis for appeal of a final grade in a Course for which a student requested a waiver of Prerequisite or Corequisite.

8. Repeating Courses

8.1. Undergraduate students

- a) Undergraduate students are not allowed to repeat the same Course, or its equivalent, more than two times.
- b) All instances of a Course will appear on the Academic Transcript. Only the grade achieved on the most recent attempt will be included in the calculation of the student's Grade Point Average.
- c) Students who have failed a third attempt of a Program required Course will be dismissed from the Program.

8.2. Graduate students

- a) Graduate students who fail one Course are required to repeat the Course or an approved alternative within 12 months of receiving the failing grade.
 - If the failed Course is designated as a mandatory Course in the Program, students must retake the same Course.
 - If the failed Course is an elective Course, students may be able to take an alternative elective Course approved by the graduate program director.
 - Students who have a second failure are dismissed from the University.
- b) All instances of a Course appear on the Academic Transcript. Only the grade achieved on the most recent attempt, or an approved alternative Course, is used to calculate the student's GPA.

- c) Repeating Courses impacts graduate student academic standing. This is outlined in “Graduate Student Grading System, Research Progress and Academic Standing Policy”.

9. Auditing Courses

- 9.1. Undergraduate and graduate students may audit a Course(s) in accordance with the Policy on Auditing an Undergraduate and Graduate Course
- 9.2. Audited Courses will not appear on a student’s Academic Transcript.

10. Curriculum Substitution

- 10.1. Undergraduate students wishing to substitute one Course for another in a set of Program requirements may request permission to do so from the dean of the faculty or designate. Requests are referred to the appropriate Faculty Council for decision.
- 10.2. Any changes to a graduate student's Program must be approved by the graduate program director.

11. Letters of Permission for Undergraduate Students

- 11.1. Students wishing to take a Course at another institution must apply for and receive a letter of permission from the University in advance of their application to the visiting institution.
- 11.2. A letter of permission ensures that the Courses to be taken at the host institution will be recognized for credit at the University and are applicable to the student's Program of study.
- 11.3. For application instructions, eligibility requirements, and restrictions, students should visit ontariotechu.ca/lop.

12. Graduate Student Course and Research Exchanges

- 12.1. Graduate students may apply to take Courses at other universities within and outside Canada and may request for credits earned to be transferred to their graduate Program at the University.
- 12.2. Graduate students from other universities within and outside Canada may apply to take Courses at the University that can be applied to their graduate work at the institution at which they are registered.
- 12.3. For application instructions, eligibility requirements, and restrictions, students should review the relevant section of the Graduate Academic Calendar or policy.

13. Registration Changes

13.1. Course Changes

The academic schedule for each Academic Year will outline predetermined dates for the following for each Semester and/or Session:

- a) Last day to add Courses.
- b) Last day to drop Courses and receive a 100 per cent refund of tuition fees.
- c) Last day to drop Courses and receive a 50 per cent refund of tuition fees.

- Dropping Courses on or prior to this date can be done without academic consequences.
- Dropping Courses after this date, and up to the last day to drop Courses, will result in a W being placed on the student's record indicating withdrawal.
- The W will not affect the Grade Point Average (GPA). However, a large number of W grades may affect the way an Academic Transcript is viewed by graduate schools or potential employers.

b) Last day to drop Courses.

- Withdrawal deadlines are not the same as the refund deadlines. Students should consult the University's academic schedule and Fees and Charges policies when considering withdrawal.

13.2. Graduate Student Registration Change Requests

The academic schedule for each Academic Year will outline predetermined dates for graduate students to submit:

- a) Request for Program change;
- b) Request to change Time-Status; or
- c) Requests for Leave of Absence

14. Voluntary Withdrawal

- 14.1.** Withdrawal from a Course can have implications for a student's academic Program, student aid and awards eligibility and full-time status.
- 14.2.** A dropped Course does not count toward degree requirements and cannot be used to satisfy Prerequisites for further Courses. In addition, the Course that is dropped may not be available in the next Semester or Session. Students are advised to consider all Course changes carefully or consult an advisor or graduate program director.
- 14.3.** Students are reminded that non-attendance in a Course is not equivalent to withdrawal. Students who cease to attend a Course but do not formally withdraw will be academically and financially responsible for that Course.

15. Request for Consideration for Late Withdrawal from a Course(s) for Undergraduate Students

- 15.1.** Students may submit a request to the Registrar's office to consider a late withdrawal from a Course(s) due to extenuating circumstances beyond their control (such as medical reasons, death in the family, etc.).
- 15.2.** All relevant supporting documentation must accompany the request.
- 15.3.** Such requests must be submitted in writing no later than 10 working days after the commencement of the subsequent Semester (including fall, winter or summer Semester) in which the student is enrolled.

16. Continuous Registration for Graduate Students

- 16.1.** Students must be registered in each Semester (including fall, winter and summer Semester) commencing with the Semester specified in their letter of offer and continuing until graduation.
- 16.2.** Students are automatically registered in a graduate continuance Course until graduation, withdrawal or Program termination. Students must actively register for all other Program Courses. Students who do not formally register in a course cannot attend classes, access Course materials on the learning management system, submit assignments for evaluation or be assigned a grade in that Course.
- 16.3.** If a student fails to maintain continuous registration in a Program or to register after the expiry of an approved leave of absence, the student's status is changed to inactive for up to one year.
- 16.4.** Students who wish to re-register within the one year period may apply for reinstatement. If reinstatement is approved, students are required to pay all fees owing as well as any reinstatement fees that are in effect at the time of reinstatement.
- 16.5.** If the student fails to register for three consecutive Semesters, their file is closed and the student is withdrawn from the Program.
- 16.6.** Should a student who has been withdrawn wish to continue their graduate studies, the student must apply for readmission. Readmission to the University and/or the student's original Program is not guaranteed.

17. Concurrent Registration

- 17.1.** Undergraduate students may not be enrolled concurrently in more than one Program at any institution unless the Programs are formally structured and approved for concurrent registration.
- 17.2.** Graduate students may not be enrolled concurrently in two Programs unless the Programs are formally structured and approved for concurrent registration.

18. Absences from Studies for Graduate Students

- 18.1.** Graduate students are expected to be uninterruptedly registered in their designated Program of study in order to support the timely completion of their degree. However, the University recognizes that under certain circumstances students may need to absent themselves from regular study while maintaining their relationship with the University.
- 18.2.** Such circumstances must have sufficient cause and an official leave of absence must be requested through the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and approved by the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- 18.3.** Acceptable circumstances include the following:
 - a)** Exceptional circumstances, including medical, extraordinary demands of employment and compassionate circumstances.
 - b)** Maternity leave, which is available to students during or following a pregnancy.

- c) Parental leave, which is available to students who face extraordinary demands in parental responsibilities or whose duties require that they be absent from their studies for a period of time.
- 18.4.** A leave normally begins on the first day of the Semester for a period of one, two or three academic Semesters. Normally, retroactive leaves of absences will not be granted.
- 18.5.** During the period of leave, the following conditions apply:
- a) Students are not registered or required to pay fees.
 - b) Students may not undertake any academic or research work, or use any of the University's facilities.
 - c) Students are not eligible to receive scholarships or assistantships from the University. In the case of other graduate student awards, the regulations of the particular granting agency apply.
 - d) Except for parental leave or in exceptional circumstances, it is not expected that a student will be granted more than one leave under the terms of this policy. The time limits for completing the degree Program will be extended by the duration of the leave taken (i.e., one, two or three Semesters, as appropriate).
 - e) Leave of absence forms will not be processed for students who have outstanding fees. Students must inform the University immediately upon return.

19. Time Status for Undergraduate Students

- 19.1.** Each Program has associated with it a number of Credit Hours that constitute a full Course load. In many Programs, this number is 15 per Semester or 30 per Academic Year.
- 19.2.** Students will be considered full-time if they are registered in a Course load of nine Credit Hours or more.
- a) Full-time status may have an impact on such things as student aid and awards eligibility, fees, income tax credits, athletic eligibility and other areas.
- 19.3.** Students are considered part-time status if they are registered in a Course load of less than nine Credit Hours.

20. Time-Status for Graduate Students

- 20.1.** Students are required to register as full-time or part-time students at the time of admission and registration.
- 20.2.** With permission from the graduate program director, students may change their status from full-time to part-time, or vice versa, by completing a Change in Full-time or Part-time Status form and submitting it to the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for approval by the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

20.3. A change in status may have an impact on student aid and awards eligibility, fees, income tax credits and other areas.

20.4. Full-time status

Graduate students are considered full-time if they meet the following criteria:

- a) Pursue their studies as a full-time occupation.
- b) Formally identify themselves as full-time students on all documentation.
- c) Maintain regular contact with their faculty advisor or research supervisor, if applicable, and be geographically available and visit the campus regularly.
- ~~d) If employed by the University, work no more than an average of 10 hours per week at diversionary employment while they are registered as a full-time student.~~
- ~~e) Diversionary employment is work that takes a student's time away from their Program of study and research. For example, teaching assistant positions are diversionary employment, while most graduate research assistantships are not if they directly support students in their Programs of study and research.~~
- ~~f) In calculating this diversionary work average, it is recognized that employment opportunities for full-time students may fluctuate throughout the year.~~
- ~~g) Students have a diversionary work allocation of 510 hours in any 12 month period and no more than 255 hours in any of each of three Semesters: fall (September to December), winter (January to April) and spring/summer (May to August).~~

20.5. Part-time status

Graduate students who do not meet the above criteria are deemed part-time students. Part-time students may have Course load restrictions. Students should consult the individual faculty with regard to the availability of part-time studies within their Program.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 21. This Policy will be reviewed as necessary and at least every three years. The Registrar, or successor thereof, is responsible to monitor and review this Policy.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- 22. This section intentionally left blank

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES & DOCUMENTS

- 23. Undergraduate Fees and Charges Policy

Graduate Fees and Charges Policy
Graduate Academic Calendar
Undergraduate Academic Calendar

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