

FILING FEE POLICY & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General Policy on Filing Fees

UC Merced's Academic Senate policy on filing fees applies to students who have completed all requirements for a terminal Master's degree or a Doctoral degree and are ready for the formal submission of their thesis or dissertation, or the final, formal examination. The filing fee status can be used for **one semester only** during the student's entire graduate training. Students applying for Filing Fee status must have been registered in the preceding academic session. A filing fee will not be accepted immediately following an academic leave of absence. Only in very rare cases will an exception be considered by the Graduate Division Dean.

a) *Procedures for Establishing Eligibility for Filing Fee Status*

To establish eligibility to pay the filing fee, the student must submit a Filing Fee Petition to the Graduate Division. The Graduate Group Chair and the Chair of the thesis or doctoral committee must approve the petition. All other requirements for the degree must have been met. (Students must consult with their School for any changes in their school's requirements.) International students, in addition, must have the SEVIS/Visa Coordinator acknowledge your eligibility by completing the "International Center" section of the Filing Fee Petition. It is important that applications for Filing Fee be submitted to the Graduate Division Dean at the very beginning of the semester for which approval is sought so that a student whose application is not approved will be able to enroll prior to the budgetary deadline.

Forms are available on the Graduate Division website <http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/>. The approved form should be brought to the Cashier's Office with a check made out for one-half of the prevailing Registration fee (current registration fee information can be found at registrar.ucmerced.edu.)

b) *Limitations on Use of University Services while on filing Fee Status*

While on filing fee status a student may seek faculty involvement for a final reading of his or her thesis or dissertation. A student may also take the final oral examination while on filing fee status. However, students may not pay the filing fee if they are still doing research or if any other use of University facilities or faculty time is anticipated. Additional restrictions while on filing fee status include the following:

- 1) Loss of eligibility for University administered financial assistance.
- 2) Loss of student services such as health services, including health insurance (GSHIP). Students may, however, arrange to self-pay.
- 3) Loss of student housing and library privileges. Students are encouraged to contact the Housing Office and Library for more information.
- 4) Loss of eligibility status for UCM academic and/or student appointments.
- 5) Loss of eligibility in most cases for deferment of student loan repayment obligations. It is the responsibility of the student to contact their loan agency to verify their loan status before applying for filing fee status.

In those instances where the Program wishes to pay the filing fee for the student, the Program must attach to the petition a transfer of expenses (financial journal) and submit these documents directly to the Graduate Division.

If, after paying the filing fee, the student should find it necessary to use the educational facilities of the University in any way other than those described in this section, the student must register and pay all applicable fees under full-time status.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible for a Filing Fee Semester?

Under certain circumstances, you may be eligible to pay a "Filing Fee" if approved by your academic unit and the Graduate Division Dean. In general, the Filing Fee option only applies to students who have completed all requirements for a Master's or Ph.D. degree, except for their "official" submission of a thesis or dissertation, or the final formal examination (e.g., the comprehensive examination for Master's candidates). However, prior to the beginning of the "filing fee" semester, ALL other requirements for the degree must have been met by the student, including advancement to candidacy. This means, for example, that you are not eligible for Filing Fee Status if you currently have incomplete grades (I, NR) in courses that you need to fulfill your degree requirements.

How much is the filing fee for my last semester at UCM?

The "filing fee" is a reduced fee paid in lieu of other student fees. It is equal to one-half of the prevailing "registration fee." The fee must be paid at the Cashier's Office once the petition is approved by the Graduate Division Dean. Students who pay the filing fee cannot enroll in any courses.

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Frequently Asked Questions Continued

What do I need to do to request approval for a reduced filing fee semester?

If a student is eligible to use the Filing Fee option, the student must obtain the signature of the Graduate Group Chair and the Chair of the thesis or doctoral committee. Once the Graduate Division Dean has approved the petition, the Filing Fee must be paid at the Cashier's Office. International students must obtain approval from the SEVIS/Visa Coordinator.

What if I later realize I don't qualify for filing fee status?

If a student has paid the Filing Fee, and subsequently must consult with the thesis or doctoral committee about substantial changes, do additional research, or make other use of University resources, s/he must register and pay the full fees. Any Filing Fee paid may be credited toward the regular fees for the same semester under these circumstances.

While on Filing Fee status a student may not:

1. Use any University facilities (i.e., Health Center, Housing, library, Recreation Center, laboratories, desk space); however, a student may purchase a library card and/or health insurance (GSHIP);
2. Make demands upon faculty time other than the time involved in the final reading of the thesis/dissertation or in holding final exams;
3. Receive a fellowship or financial aid;
4. Take course work of any kind;
5. Hold any University academic or student appointment.

Additional Information:

1. The Filing Fee may be paid in lieu of registration for **only one** academic semester during the student's graduate training at UC Merced.
2. Ordinarily, the student applying for Filing Fee status must have been registered in the preceding academic semester. A Filing Fee will not be accepted following readmission, and only under exceptional circumstances will a Filing Fee be accepted following a leave of absence.
3. The Filing Fee option preserves the student's candidacy status with the University; however, the student is NOT considered a full-time registered student by the University. The student should be aware that many loan agencies do not recognize the student as being enrolled while on filing fee status and may require earlier repayment of student loans.
4. International visa restrictions may preclude Filing Fee status for students who are not citizens or permanent residents of the United States. You should verify your eligibility for Filing Fee status via the SEVIS/Visa Coordinator well in advance of need. If you are eligible, you need to have the SEVIS/Visa Coordinator acknowledge your eligibility on the Filing Fee Petition.
5. Students who plan to continue graduate study toward the Ph.D. without interruption of graduate status are ineligible for Filing Fee status for a Master's degree. (i.e., students can assume Filing Fee status for only one semester during their entire graduate career at UCM.)
6. If all degree requirements are not completed during the semester for which a Filing Fee was paid, the student must subsequently register and pay all applicable fees in full for any subsequent semester.