

## Summer 2025 – Registration Requirements and Options for Graduate Students: FICA-Exemption and Financial Aid Eligibility Requirements

**All Graduate Assistants may register** for GRAD 603 (class number 1460), which carries two (2) credits at no cost. GRAD 603 is NOT a mandatory enrollment requirement for FICA exemption.

***FICA is a federal payroll tax and stands for the Federal Insurance Contributions Act. It includes contributions to Social Security and Medicare.***

**International Graduate Assistants with F-1, J-1, M-1, or Q-1** immigration statuses MAY be FICA-exempt, but should consult the information in the following links to determine eligibility for exemption:

<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/foreign-student-liability-for-social-security-and-medicare-taxes>

**To retain FICA-exemption** during summer 2025, domestic Graduate Assistants (GAs) must be registered for at least three (3) credits at all times. If not enrolled in regular coursework providing an enrollment of at least 3 credits for the entire summer, students should choose the proper combination of GRAD 603 (fixed at 2 credits) and research credits to satisfy the minimum enrollment requirement, as shown in the table below.

Special Notes:

1. *Summer enrollment in GRAD 603 is NOT a mandatory requirement for FICA exemption.*
2. *Ph.D. students who have reached candidacy are allowed to register for either 898 or 899 for summer FICA exemption.*
3. *“Credits Billed” refers to the number of credits students are charged for based on differential billing practices. For example, 898 is registered for 3 credits but billed as 1 credit (1/3 billing rate).*

Course	Minimum Registration	Credits Billed	Tuition	Summer Session Fee	Technology Fee	Auxiliary Facilities Fee	Total
Independent Study	1 credit	1	\$779	\$20	\$19	\$28	\$846
799 - Master's Thesis Research (billed at 1/2)	2 credits	1	\$779	\$20	\$19	\$28	\$846
898 - Doctoral Pre-Candidacy Research (billed at 1/3)	3 credits	1	\$779	\$20	\$19	\$28	\$846
899 - Doctoral Candidacy Research (billed at 2/9)	9 credits	2	\$1,558	\$20	\$38	\$56	\$1,672

Based on the table above, enrollment in either 898 or 899 is sufficient to satisfy the FICA exemption requirement; GRAD 603 is not needed. If enrolled in Independent Study or 799, then the addition of GRAD 603 (2 credits) will be required to reach 3 credits and satisfy the FICA exemption requirement.

**If domestic Graduate Assistants are not registered** for at least three (3) credits at all times during the summer, the Graduate Assistant and the supporting department will each pay approximately 7.65% of the student's gross pay each pay period as FICA.

**To be eligible to receive financial aid** during the summer, domestic graduate students must be registered for at least six (6) total credits between both summer sessions [e.g., three (3) in session I and three (3) in session II or six (6) credits in either session] THAT DO NOT INCLUDE THE GA COURSE, GRAD 603. The following table summarizes the registration options and their associated costs to be eligible to receive financial aid.

Course	Minimum Registration	Credits Billed	Tuition	Summer Session Fee	Technology Fee	Auxiliary Facilities Fee	Total
Non-Research Graduate Classes	6 credits	6	\$4,674	\$20	\$114	\$168	\$4,976
799 - Master's Thesis Research (billed at ½)	6 credits	3	\$2,337	\$20	\$57	\$84	\$2,498
898 - Doctoral Pre-Candidacy Research (billed at ½)	6 credits	2	\$1,558	\$20	\$38	\$56	\$1,672
899 - Doctoral Candidacy Research (billed at 2/9)	9 credits	2	\$1,558	\$20	\$38	\$56	\$1,672

#### Questions?

For general information about summer 2025, please visit the Office of Summer, Winter, and Special Programs at [www.umbc.edu/summer](http://www.umbc.edu/summer).

For information about billing and payments, please visit Student Business Services at [sbs.umbc.edu](http://sbs.umbc.edu).

For information about financial aid, please visit the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at [financialaid.umbc.edu](http://financialaid.umbc.edu). For registration information, please visit the Office of the Registrar at [registrar.umbc.edu](http://registrar.umbc.edu).

For information on the GA GRAD 603 course or any other assistance, please visit the Graduate School at <https://gradschool.umbc.edu/funding/assistantships/registration/>.

For more information on Student FICA Exception, please visit <https://www.irs.gov/government-entities/federal-state-local-governments/student-fica-exception>

\*Official tuition and fee rates for a given term are located at [sbs.umbc.edu](http://sbs.umbc.edu).