All But Dissertation Status & Doctoral Student FAQs

This document addresses frequently asked questions pertaining to forms, processes, and policy related to All But Dissertation status at Carnegie Mellon University.

1. **What is All But Dissertation?**

   All But Dissertation is a status doctoral students declare once they have completed all requirements and have only the dissertation, including proposal, to complete. This status ensures students are appropriately coded and charged in S3 according to their location (on campus – *In Residence*, or off campus – *In Absentia*).

2. **Does my department need to use the All But Dissertation status and process?**

   As an institution, Carnegie Mellon requires all doctoral degree-granting departments/programs to use the All But Dissertation process as set by the Provost.

3. **Can a student be supported by a department while *In Absentia*?**

   It is not common for this scenario to take place. Students *In Absentia* cannot be supported and cannot get a stipend.

4. **Are students in All But Dissertation status permitted to be Teaching Assistants?**

   This may be permitted per agreement between the student and department; it is not specifically required nor restricted by the university.

5. **Can a student be employed on campus if *In Absentia*?**

   Students *In Absentia* can be employed as long as their position is not related to their degree work or if they are employed as a teaching assistant (See #4).

6. **A student has been *In Absentia* for the majority of the semester; they only became *In Residence* once they defended their dissertation. Do they still need to pay full semester fees for transportation (and/or others)?**

   All fees are charged in the final semester without adjustment. These fees include transportation, technology, and activities for the fall and spring semesters; summer semester fees are technology only. Unique circumstances may be appealed for review by the University Registrar without guarantee of adjustment.

7. **If a current student is *In Absentia* and not actively engaged with the university, why do we need to monitor the enrollment status and update the record in S3?**

   We must always keep records updated regardless of status; it is important to have accurate records reflected in S3 for various reasons for data integrity. Accurate, updated statuses/records ensures students stay active in university databases, keeping them in contact with reports, communications, verifications, and other affiliation-related benefits with the university (e.g., library access, technology and software, active Andrew accounts, etc.).
8. **Can In Absentia students take leaves of absence?**

   No, *In Absentia* students do not go on leave of absence status. Leave of absence is a separate status which is considered a separation from the university, whereas, students *In Absentia* are still considered to be actively pursuing their degree.

9. **Why do *in Absentia* students need to pay technology fees?**

   Students in any status are granted access to CMU technology, software, licenses, and support which require fees to fund. Technology fees are non-negotiable; *In Absentia* students will most likely continue to use computing resources affiliated with CMU.

10. **Are *In Absentia* students eligible for student health insurance?**

    Health insurance is not automatically assessed as it is not a fee. Continuation is determined on a case-by-case basis with special approval with University Health Services.

11. **Does *In Absentia* status extend time to complete the degree?**

    No, the preexisting timeline for degree completion is not altered nor extended when entering *In Absentia* status.

12. **Why do we need to submit a Doctoral Student Final Semester form if we certify students in S3 independently?**

    Submitting a form at the completion of a student’s degree is necessary because there is a checklist of processes that need to occur between the University Registrar’s Office and the Student Accounts Office. Running queries for certification dates does not provide us with additional relevant information, nor is it efficient for our processing. Submitting a form provides an official document to include with the student’s academic record.

13. **The date the department certified the student differs from the date of certification in S3. Can this be corrected?**

    Unfortunately, this date cannot be corrected once entered; however, as long as the correct date is indicated on the doctoral student final semester form, we will have proof of the official date affecting tuition adjustments, if applicable.

14. **Are All But Dissertation students permitted to register for courses beyond their Dissertation Research units in their final semester?**

    Taking additional courses is permitted pending department approval. The final semester tuition adjustment, if applicable, may be affected if additional courses are taken beyond research units.

15. **Why is the 01999 course added to the student’s schedule if they have not taken a course in their final semester?**

    The 01999 course is not actually a course, per se, but rather it is a placeholder representing all requirements being met, including certification, in their final semester. This course is 0 units, ungraded, and added with processing of the Doctoral Student Final Semester form.