


**PRESIDENTIAL POLICY MEMORANDUM NO. 293**

**To:** All Virginia Tech Faculty and Graduate Students  
**From:** Timothy D. Sands   
**Date:** April 6, 2015  
**Subject:** Graduate in Absentia Status

**Approved by the Commission on Graduate Studies & Polices:** February 18, 2015  
**Approved by the University Council:** April 6, 2015  
**Approved by the President:** April 6, 2015  
**Effective Date:** Upon Approval

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University Council approved a resolution on graduate in absentia status.

Following is the text of the resolution.

**WHEREAS**, graduate students are normally expected to remain continuously enrolled at the university until they complete the requirements for their degree; and

**WHEREAS**, to be considered continuously enrolled, most graduate students must normally be enrolled in at least three academic credits each Fall and Spring semester; and

**WHEREAS**, graduate students sometimes perform academic work away from campus, making little use of University resources; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the following shall be the official policy of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University:

1. Graduate students in good standing who for academic reasons need to spend an entire Fall or Spring semester away from campus can apply for and be granted in absentia status.
2. In absentia status is granted for work that is directly related to a student's academic course of study and that is integral to her or his degree. Examples include field research or laboratory work with research collaborators at remote institutions.
3. In absentia status is approved by each student's home academic unit and then by the Graduate School.

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4. To qualify for in absentia status, students must be stationed a minimum of 50 miles away from Blacksburg, and must not work on or in conjunction with any of Virginia Tech's satellite campuses and facilities.
5. Students can remain in absentia for two consecutive semesters, but must then return to residency at the University for a minimum of one semester. Exemptions may be granted by the Graduate School when longer periods of absence (eg. fieldwork) are required.
6. During each Fall or Spring semester in absentia, students must register for one credit hour.
7. In absentia status is not available to students who
  - a. have not adhered to the continuous enrollment requirement,
  - b. are supported by an assistantship, or
  - c. are participating in an exchange program or dual degree program with an officially designated partner institution.

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