

# Reduced Course Load for F-1 Students

- Do not enroll for less than a full course load or drop below a full course load without PRIOR approval from ISS.
- Read the instructions on the reverse side of this form before completing the form

Name (Print) _____ Student ID # _____	
Country of Citizenship _____ Birth date _____	
College _____ Major _____ Term & Year admitted _____	
Degree Program _____ Expected Date of Graduation (month/year) _____	
Phone _____ (home) _____ (office) E-mail Address _____	
Indicate the term for which you are requesting a reduced course load: <input type="checkbox"/> Fall <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Year: _____	Indicate the total number of credits you will be taking during the requested term: _____  Course ID: _____  Course Name: _____

**Indicate the reason for your reduced course load:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ___ 1. Final semester and less than a full course load needed to graduate.<br>___ 2. Academic difficulties (Attach adviser letter)<br>a. ___ Initial difficulties with the English language or reading requirements<br>b. ___ Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods<br>c. ___ Cancelling a class due to improper course level placement. | ___ 3. Medical Reason (Attach doctor letter)<br>___ 4. Participating in a full-time required internship or co-up program.<br>___ 5. Work on thesis or dissertation, or preparing for preliminary examinations.<br>___ 6. Conducting full-time research overseas for more than 5 months (advisor's Letter of consent) |
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**STUDENT'S SIGNATURE:**

I have read and I understand the instructions on the reverse side of this form.

Signature of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ACADEMIC ADVISER'S SIGNATURE:**

As the academic adviser, I have discussed the above circumstances with the student, reviewed the educational implications, and recommend that the student's reduced course load be approved.

Signature of Academic Adviser \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print Name and Title \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. \_\_\_\_\_

**ISS ADVISER'S SIGNATURE:**

Signature of ISS Adviser \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Full Course of Study Requirement**

Immigration regulations require that all F-1 students register for and complete a full course of study each term during the academic year. A student may request a reduced course load if the reason meets the criteria outlined by immigration regulations. A request for a reduced course load must be supported by your academic adviser as well as ISS and must be pre-approved. **Dropping below a full course of study without PRIOR approval from ISS results in a loss of legal status.**

### **To Request a Reduced Course Load:**

1. Determine if you need to submit a Reduced Course Load (RCL) form. Read the section titled.
  2. Determine if your situation is acceptable for a reduced course load. Read the section "Acceptable Reasons for a Reduced Course Load" below. If your reason does not match one of those listed, you are NOT eligible for a reduced course load and you must enroll full-time.
  3. Complete this form and select the reason for your reduced course load.
  4. Submit the form to your academic adviser for signature.
  5. If you selected reason #2 (Academic Difficulty), request a support letter from your academic adviser.
  6. If you have selected reason #3 (Medical Reason), request a letter from your doctor.
  7. Submit the completed RCL and any necessary support letters to ISS for approval.
- The **deadline** for submitting a request for reduced course load is the first day of the semester.
  - If you plan to drop below the full course minimum during a semester in progress, you must submit this form to ISS **PRIOR** to withdrawing from your course(s). Dropping below full-time without **PRIOR** approval from ISS constitutes a loss of legal status.

### **General Registration Information**

- **Minimum credit requirements** for...

*Graduate School Students:* 8 credits per term

*Undergraduate Students:* 12 credits per term

- **Summer Session Enrollment:** Continuing students are not required to enroll during summer session. Students admitted to begin a program in the summer **MUST** enroll full-time during the summer session.
- Students with F-1 status may include a maximum of 1 course of not more than 3 credits of **Distance Learning** (on-line course) in their full course requirement per semester.
- **Audited** courses do NOT count toward your full course requirement. The audit grade basis for courses means you do not earn credit for the course.
- You are responsible for your enrollment. If your department completes enrollment for you, make sure that your enrollment occurs before the drop/add deadline of the term. SEVIS reporting occurs early in the semester; therefore retroactive enrollment is not acceptable. If your department does not enroll you by the deadline, you will lose your legal status.

### **Acceptable Reasons for a Reduced Course load**

#### **1. Final Semester**

- For students who will complete their degree at the end of the term for which the RCL is requested.

#### **2. Academic Difficulty** due to:

- a. Improper course level placement
  - b. Initial difficulty with English language requirements
  - c. Unfamiliarity with US teach methods
- May be used once per degree level.
  - Requires a supporting memo from your academic adviser
  - Student must maintain half-time enrollment during the semester of RCL due to academic difficulty.

#### **3. Medical Reason**

- Limited to 12 months of reduced course load per degree level.
- Requires supporting documentation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy or clinical psychologist. The letter does not need to state the specific medical condition, but it must indicate that the condition requires less than full-time enrollment.

#### **4. Participating in a full-time, *required* internship or co-op program**

- Requires evidence of the internship requirements or approval of participation in co-op program.

#### **5. Graduate Student Working on thesis or dissertation; or preparing for preliminary examinations**

- For graduate students who have completed required coursework.

#### **6. Conducting Full-Time Research Overseas for Degree Program**

- For graduate students who must depart the U.S. for a period of time greater than 5 months to conduct full-time research. Requires verification letter from academic adviser.