

Reduced Course Load Instructions

For Students:

Students that drop below a full course load of study before receiving authorization from the office of International Student Services will be in violation of their F-1 status. Students can only receive one reduced course load for academic difficulty per education level. Please complete the first section of the application and have your advisor/ chairperson complete the second page. Students applying for reduced course load for medical reasons, must submit accompanying documentation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist, to the ISS to substantiate the illness or medical condition. The student must provide current medical documentation and the DSO must reauthorize the drop below full course of study each new term, session, or semester. A student may be authorized to reduce course load for a reason of illness or medical condition on more than one occasion while pursuing a course of study, so long as the aggregate period of that authorization does not exceed 12 months.

For Professors/ Advisors:

F-1 international students can be authorized to drop below a full course load of study once in their academic career. When filling out the second page, please select only **one** reason for reduced course load. Please be aware that this application for reduced course load is reported to Department of Homeland Security and becomes part of the student's immigration record.

For Medical Professionals:

According to Department of Homeland Security, a recommendation for reduced course load can only be submitted by a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or a licensed clinical psychologist. Please provide a letter on official letterhead with your license number stating why you recommend that this student not take a full course load of classes. Please be aware that this application for reduced course load will be reported to Department of Homeland Security and becomes part of the student's immigration record.

Please note: Not all application for reduced course loads will be approved.

Application for F-1 Reduced Course Load

F-1 international students are required by U.S. law to pursue a full course of study each fall and spring semester. A full course of study is defined as carrying 12 credits at the undergraduate level, or 9 credits at the graduate level. Under certain academic circumstances, you may qualify for a reduced course load (RCL) of 6 credits for both the undergraduate and the graduate level, or less for an illness or medical condition. To apply, please note the following:

1. You must still be enrolled full-time. If you already dropped below full-time, you do **not** qualify.
2. Have your academic advisor complete this form explaining the academic difficulties that you are experiencing. Academic difficulties are restricted to initial difficulties with English or reading requirements, unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods or improper course level placement.
3. If you are suffering from an illness or medical condition, you must provide us with documentation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist describing the nature of your illness or condition.
4. Complete this form and submit it to the Designated School Official (DSO) **before taking any action** to reduce your course load.

The Designated School Official will review your application and if approved, you will be given authorization to reduce your course load for a specific period. A reduced course load based on academic difficulties may only be authorized for one term during your program of study. A reduced course load warranted by an illness or medical condition may be extended up to 12 months if there are serious circumstances necessitating such an extension. **You are required to resume a full course of study in the semester immediately following your RCL authorization** (excluding summer and winter).

To Be Completed By Student

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____
Student ID Number: _____ – _____ – _____ SEVIS ID Number: _____
Semester for which you are requesting a Reduced Course Load: _____
Major: _____ Degree Level: Graduate Undergraduate
Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Reason you are requesting a Reduced Course Load: *Check one*

Academic Difficulty: *My advisor has completed the other side of this form.*

- Initial difficulty with the English Language.
- Initial difficulty with reading requirements.
- Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods or requirements.
- Improper course level placement.

Illness or Medical Condition: *Documentation is attached.*

- Illness or medical condition.

**ADVISOR'S RECOMMENDATION FOR F-1 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT
REDUCED COURSE LOAD**

I recommend (name of student) _____
carry a Reduced Course Load of _____ credits (not less than 6) for the _____ (semester) for
the following academic reason:

Initial difficulty with the English language; *describe the difficulty and why it is considered
"initial":* _____

Initial difficulty with reading requirements; *describe the difficulty and why it is considered
"initial":* _____

Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods or requirements; *describe the difficulty the
student is experiencing:* _____

Improper course level placement: *describe the reason for the improper placement:*

The student's expected graduation date is: _____

Name of advisor: _____ Signature of advisor: _____

Advisor's phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Department: _____ Date: _____

Designated School Official Action:

Approved: Yes No

Period covered: _____ **SEVIS RCL authorization on:** _____

Reason for denial: _____

Name of DSO: _____

DSO signature: _____ **Date:** _____