

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 form. Read the section titled "General Registration Information" below.
 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 have 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. Come to ISS during F-1 walk-in hours with your original reduced course load form, a photocopy for ISS, and any necessary support letters. If accepted, an ISS adviser will sign your form and return the original to you for your records.
- 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: 6 credits per term
 - Undergraduate Students: 12 credits per term
 - Note: undergraduates are automatically charged tuition for 13 credits. If you are taking less than 13 credits, you must also submit a "Reduced Credit Load" form to your college advising office.
 - Non-degree seekers: 12 credits per term
 - Professional School Students between 6 and 12 credits per term, depending on your program
- **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 of admission.
- **Thesis credits** DO count toward your full course of study requirement. As long as the total number of credits meets your minimum requirement, you do not need to submit this form.
- **The Full-Time-Equivalent** (FTE courses 8444 for PhD and 8333 for Master's students) satisfy the full-course requirement for Graduate Students. If you are taking the FTE

course, you do NOT need to submit a Reduced Course Load form to ISS.

- **Grad0999** enrollment does NOT satisfy the full course requirement. Students enrolling in Grad0999 must also submit a Reduced Course Load form to ISS in order to maintain immigration status.
- Students with F-1 status may include a maximum of 1 course of not more than 3 credits of **Distance Learning (IDL) in their full course requirement.**
- **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.
- Enroll for all of your credits at the beginning of the term. If you **plan to split your enrollment between the first and second half of the semester**, you must enroll for ALL courses at the beginning of the term. You may not wait until mid-term to enroll for second-half courses.
- 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 reduced course load 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 reduced course load 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.