



REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO TAKE A REDUCED COURSE LOAD BASED ON ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY

US Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations require that F-1 visa international students register for *and complete* a full-time course load each regular semester. Under the law, “full-time study” for an undergraduate student is defined as 12 credits. There are a very limited number of exceptions to the full-time requirement: academic difficulty (for new students only), illness or medical condition, and completion of study in the current term. Permission to pursue a reduced course load, or to drop below full-time, must be requested in advance and granted by the Designated School Official (DSO)/the International Student Advisor. A student who drops below a full course of study without prior approval of the DSO will be considered out of status.

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____
Major: _____ Circle Degree Level: Bachelor’s Master’s
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

This form is for use in documenting a reduced course load based on academic difficulty.

Please read the essential information listed below and sign on the back page to indicate your agreement.

- A reduced course load for academic difficulty must be based on one of three reasons: initial difficulty with the English language and/or reading requirements, unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods, or improper course placement.
- A reduced course load based on academic difficulty must consist of at least six (6) credits, per USCIS regulations.
- If the request is approved, the student must resume a full course of study in the next available semester (excluding summer) in order to maintain legal student status.
- A student previously authorized to drop below a full course of study due to academic difficulty is not eligible for another such reduced course load.
- Designated School Officials are advised to create standardized policies for authorizing reduced course loads that include documentation from a student’s department head, academic advisor, or other appropriate person.

For signature by the student:

I have read the information on the previous page and understand my legal obligations. In particular, I understand that this is a one-time authorization, and that in future semesters I must complete a full-time course load of 12 credits or more.

Print name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

For signature by an academic advisor:

The student named above is applying for a reduced course load based on (check one):

_____ Initial difficulty with the English language and/or reading requirements

_____ Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods

_____ Improper course placement (please provide course number and name): _____

Semester and year for this request: _____

If you have additional comments to share, particularly regarding an improper course placement, please do so here:

I certify that the student's request to take a reduced course load is legitimate and that it is based on one of the three reasons listed above.

Advisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name & Department _____

Please return this form with documentation to International Services, MSC 207)

If you have questions or concerns, please call (203) 837-3270, or email warnerd@wcsu.edu.

Authorized in SEVIS _____

DSO Signature _____