

REDUCED COURSE LOAD AUTHORIZATION INSTRUCTIONS AND FORM

Instructions and Overview:

Non-immigrant students in the United States must maintain their student status by adhering to immigration regulations set forth by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). As part of maintaining one's immigration status, **F-1 students must attend school full-time** (pursue a full course of study) at the school that they are authorized by DHS to attend as indicated on their I-20. (For a more complete list of requirements for F-1 students to maintain their status, see the International Education website at <http://my.thechicagoschool.edu>).

To be considered full time, you must register full time based on the requirement of your degree program.

Although immigration regulations do grant provisions for F-1 students to take a break during the institution's vacation period (typically the summer), the lock step nature of the academic programs at The Chicago School requires all students, including international students, to be enrolled full time during the summer.

When classes are in session, a student may be exempt from being full time if he/she has been authorized to **drop below a full course of study** (see instructions and application for *Authorization to Drop Below Full Time*) or otherwise be **certified as pursuing a full course of study** (see the instructions and application for *Full Course of Study*).

Acceptable Conditions for Dropping Below a Full Course of Study:

Academic Difficulties

A reduced course load can be approved on the basis of academic difficulty basis only once per program level. Additionally, a reduced course load due to academic difficulty:

1. **Student is having "Initial Difficulty with the English Language."** Initial difficulty is defined as within the first year of study. Student will seek assistance with language difficulties and pursue a full-course-of-study in future terms. This condition for a reduced course load should not be used if the student has previously studied in the United States or if English is the student's native language.
2. Student is **unfamiliar with American teaching methods or is having initial difficulties with reading requirements**. To receive authorization for a reduced course load for this reason, the student must submit a letter from the faculty member teaching the course or the student's academic advisor explaining the difficulty. This condition for a reduced course load should not be used if the student has previously studied in the United States.
3. Student is being advised by the Academic Advisor to drop a course because of **improper course level placement**. To receive authorization for a reduced course load, the student must submit a letter from the advisor explaining the situation. This reason cannot be used in the case in which a student is enrolled for a course required for the academic program, unless it was taken out of sequence or without necessary prerequisites for the course.

Medical Condition

4. Student is compelled by **illness or other medical condition** to interrupt or reduce a course of study. To receive authorization for a reduced course load, the student must provide IPS with a signed and dated (within six months of submission) note from student's medical physician and Department Manager/Academic Advisor. Student must resume a full-course-of-study *within one year* from the date of written authorization by IPS in order to maintain status. This reason can be used a maximum of 2 semesters.

NOTE: Submission of this form in and of itself does not constitute approval. It is only valid *if* you qualify for one of the conditions outlined in the instructions for the forms, and are approved by your DSO

Approval of your Request for a Reduced Course Load:

After the student submits this form to the DSO for review, the DSO will email the student to confirm approval and work on your I-20 for a reduced course load. For assistance in withdrawing from one or more classes, please see the Office of the Registrar.

If you do not hear from the DSO within two (2) weeks of submission of this form and you need to drop a course before the school drop deadline, contact your DSO a few days in advance to check the status of your form. Your DSO is not responsible for tuition charges incurred if you drop a course after the school's drop deadline.

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SUBMIT COMPLETED FORM TO:

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
800.684.2890 (phone)
international@thechicagoschool.edu

APPLICATION DEADLINE: This form is for F-1/J-1 students to request full course of study authorization. If enrolling for less than full time, this form must be submitted at least two weeks PRIOR to the start of each term. If dropping a course *during* the term, this form must be completed PRIOR to dropping any courses. **Students who fail to obtain proper authorization from a Designated School Official (DSO) before dropping below full time will be out of status.**

LAST NAME: _____ STUDENT ID#: _____
 FIRST NAME: _____ MIDDLE NAME: _____
 TCSP E-MAIL: _____ PHONE #: _____ LOCATION: _____
 DEGREE LEVEL: _____ PROGRAM: _____ SEVIS ID#: N _____
 PROGRAM START DATE: _____ EXPECTED DATE OF COMPLETION: _____
(Month/Date/Year) (Month/Date/Year)
 TERM AND YEAR TO DROP BELOW FULL TIME: _____

During the term requested, I will carry _____ credit hours

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Please select the reason you are requesting to drop below full time. Attach any required documentation to this form and submit it your DSO.

1. **Student is having "initial (within first year of study) English language difficulties."** The student must include a letter from The Department Chair assessing the English language difficulty and recommended actions.
2. **Student is unfamiliar with American teaching methods or is having initial difficulties with reading requirements.** Attach a letter from the faculty member teaching the course or your Advisor explaining the difficulty.
3. Student is being advised by the Academic Advisor to drop Course Number _____ because of **improper course level placement.** Attach a letter from advisor explaining situation.
4. Student is compelled by **illness or other medical condition** to interrupt or reduce a course of study. The student must provide the DSO with a signed and dated (within six months of submission) note from student's medical physician.

I hereby request that the above named student be authorized to drop below full time enrollment. I have read the instructions and understand the conditions by which I am requesting this reduced course load. If required, I have attached a letter with additional explanation.

ADVISOR NAME: _____ E-MAIL: _____
 ADVISOR SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____