Reduced Course Load Request Form

An international student advisor must authorize a drop below full course load (commonly referred to as a "reduced course load," or RCL) and update SEVIS prior to the student reducing his or her course load.

A student who drops below a full course of study without the prior approval of International Student and Scholar Services will be considered out of status.

Note: The only exception to the requirement that a student be registered full-time before submitting this form is a student in his/her final semester of study. Undergraduate or graduate students may enroll in a part-time course load during final semester of degree program, but we need to have an academic advisor confirm that the student is, in fact, in her/his final semester.

A reduced course load can be approved due to “academic difficulty” only once while pursuing a course of study at a particular program level.

Academic Difficulty includes the following:

- Initial Difficulties with difficulty with reading requirements;
- Initial Difficulties with the English Language;
- Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods (must be first semester in the U.S.); and
- Improper Course level placement (student didn’t take a pre-requisite to a course s/he is registered for now)

- A student requesting authorization for a reduced course load due to initial difficulty or improper course placement must remain enrolled for no fewer than six (6) semester hours, or half the clock hours required for a full course of study.

The application for a reduced course load is available on-line at
https://noncredit.temple.edu/portal/applications/applicationProfile.do?method=loadApplicationIndex&applicationProfileId=15136252
Reduced Course Load (RCL) Based on a Medical Condition

An F-1 or J-1 student may be authorized for part-time or non-enrollment, if necessary, due to the student’s documented temporary illness or medical condition for a period of time not to exceed an aggregate of 12 months while the student is pursuing a course of study at a particular program level.

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.

In order to be approved for a reduced course load due to a medical condition, the student must provide to the ISSS “medical documentation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist.” This would be a letter from one of the above referenced professionals indicating:

1. The specific nature of the illness;
2. How and for what period of time has the medical professional has been treating student for this illness;
3. The medical professional’s recommendation for either a partial reduction of courses or a recommendation for complete withdraw from classes; and
4. The medical professional’s prognosis as to when student will be able to resume full-time studies.

The letter must be typed on the medical professional’s letterhead and signed in blue ink by the medical professional. This letter must be accompanied by this RCL Request form.

If the ISSS finds the documentation sufficient, we can authorize the student to withdraw from some or all of the courses for which the student is registered. If the illness continues and the student needs to request authorization for an additional RCL, the student must submit the request to this office BEFORE the beginning of the semester in question. The request must include a new letter from the medical professional and a new Request for Reduce Course Load form.

THE STUDENT SHOULD NOT ASSUME THAT THE REQUEST WILL BE APPROVED. STUDENT MUST REGISTER FOR A FULL COURSE OF STUDY. IF REQUEST IS APPROVED STUDENT WILL BE PERMITTED TO WITHDRAW. IT IS THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THE PAPERWORK IS SUBMITTED TO THE ISSS IN TIME TO AVOID ANY UNIVERSITY FEES ASSOCIATED WITH A LATE WITHDRAW.

- USCIS DOES NOT RECOGNIZE FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS AS A VALID REASON FOR DEVIATION FROM A FULL COURSE OF STUDY.
- USCIS does not accept “I don’t have enough classes to take this semester.” The ISSS has contacted the USCIS several times regarding this issue and has always been instructed that the student must add non-required courses.
- A reduced course load can be approved on the academic difficulty basis only once while pursuing a course of study at a particular program level. If an F-1 student has already been authorized to drop below a full course of study at one program level, he or she is not eligible for a second authorization due to academic difficulties while pursuing a course of study at that same program level, even if the prior RCL was granted by another institution.

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