

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

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REDUCED COURSE LOAD OVERVIEW

Federal regulations require F-1/J-1 students to pursue the completion of their degree program on a full-time basis at all times. Full-time status is determined as follows:

Undergraduate students:	12 credits	LLM/SJD students:	9 credits
Graduate students:	9 credits (without an assistantship)	JD students:	12 credits
	6 credits (with an assistantship)	UCAELI students:	22hours/week

Reduced Course Load Eligibility

Reduced Course Load for Last Semester: You may take a reduced course load if you are in your final semester of study and you need less than full time registration to complete all degree requirements. Please be advised that if you choose this option, you should be sure that you will complete in the current semester. Students who will complete their degree in the summer term must be registered full time in spring. **ISSS will shorten your Form I-20/DS-2019 to the expected date of degree completion indicated by your advisor on this form.** You will be required to complete all requirements for your degree by the date on your new Form I-20/DS-2019.

Reduced Course Load for Academic Difficulty: All students must attempt a full time course load before requesting a Reduced Course Load for Academic Difficulty. Applications to take a Reduced Course Load for Academic Difficulty will be accepted only after the 8th business day of the semester. *You must submit this form AND receive approval confirmation from ISSS BEFORE dropping below full-time for academic reasons.* You may be eligible to take a reduced course load if you are having academic difficulty related to your initial adjustment to English language, U.S. teaching methods, or reading requirements. In general, these reasons may justify the need for the reduced course load only in the first academic year. If you were placed in a course level that is inappropriate you may be eligible to be authorized for a Reduced Course Load based on **improper course level placement**. You may only have a reduced course load for academic difficulty **one time** per program level (i.e. Bachelor's, Master's, etc.) Changing schools or changing majors does not make you eligible for a new period of reduced course load. Students who are authorized for a reduced course load for academic difficulty reasons must maintain at least half time enrollment, and must resume full time study in the next available semester.

Reduced Course Load for Illness or Medical Condition: *You must submit this form AND receive approval confirmation from ISSS BEFORE dropping below full-time for medical reasons.* You may be eligible for a reduced course load if you have an illness or medical condition (including mental health condition) that is confirmed by a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist. You may drop to as few as 0 credits if your reduced course load is based on an illness or medical condition. Students are restricted to 12 months cumulative of authorized reduced course load based on illness or medical conditions per degree level. Changing schools or majors does not make you eligible for a new period of reduced course load. **Students applying for a reduced course load are required to submit a letter from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist that substantiates the illness or medical condition, recommends the reduced course load and estimates a needed recovery period.**

Other Special Circumstances

Research or Study Abroad: If you are conducting graduate research or academic study abroad, your SEVIS record can remain active if: 1) you maintain full time registration for the duration of your absence and are engaged in full time work towards your UConn degree while away, and 2) the duration of your study or research abroad does not exceed 5 months (research) or one year (coursework). If you conduct research abroad and register for continuing registration (GRAD 5998, 5999, 6998 or 6999) your SEVIS record will be terminated. You will need to meet with an international advisor prior to departure to discuss your options for regaining your F-1/J-1 status. If you are in your final semester and will conduct research or study abroad then you must meet with an international advisor prior to your departure to discuss whether or not your SEVIS record can be kept active with a reduced course load authorization for last semester.

Leave of Absence: Students taking a temporary leave of absence from UConn must obtain approval from the appropriate academic offices and notify ISSS of their plans. During a leave of absence your SEVIS record will be terminated; you must meet with an international advisor to discuss your options for reactivating your SEVIS status to resume your studies. Students who take an authorized leave of absence have a 15 day grace period from the effective leave of absence date to depart the United States (unless leave is based on medical reasons and student has approved medical reduced course load).

Instructions:

- If your application is based on “**Last Semester**”, you complete section A, and give to your academic advisor to complete Section C, before submitting the form to ISSS.
- If your application is based on **academic difficulty** or **medical reasons**, you must first meet with ISSS **BEFORE** you meet with your academic advisor. ISSS will complete section B (if we feel you are eligible based on the reasons presented) and then your academic advisor must complete Section C. Then you will submit the completed form to ISSS.

Upon approval, ISSS will issue F-1 students a new Form I-20. **If your reduced course load is based on final semester your Form I-20/DS-2019 will be shortened to the program end date indicated by your academic advisor. This is your deadline to complete your degree.** Please use the new Form I-20/DS-2019 and keep all previous forms for your records.

REDUCED COURSE LOAD AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM

SECTION A: To be Completed by Student

Name: _____ UConn ID: _____
Family Name First Name
Department or Major: _____ Email Address _____
Phone: _____ Visa Status: F-1 J-1
Degree Sought/Program: Bachelor's Master's Doctorate Other _____
Is this your last semester? Yes No

Have you ever been authorized to take a reduced course load for **academic difficulty** in the past (including other schools attended in the U.S.)? Yes No

Have you ever been authorized to take a reduced course load for an **illness or medical condition** in the past (including other schools attended in the U.S.)? Yes No

I certify that I have reviewed the reduced course load information (page 1) and that I understand how the reduced course load authorization will impact my SEVIS record and/or F-1/J-1 status:

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

SECTION B: To be Completed by International Advisor (for academic difficulty or illness/medical condition only)

In consultation with the applicant for the Reduced Course Load I have evaluated the circumstances and consider the student eligible for a Reduced Course Load pursuant to 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(6)(iii) based on the following eligibility criterion:

- Student will take a leave of absence. Expected date of return to UConn _____ (mm/dd/yyyy). SEVIS record will be terminated on _____ (mm/dd/yyyy).
- Student is experiencing difficulty because of (please choose the most appropriate, only one):
 - Improper course level placement Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods
 - Initial difficulties with the English Language Initial difficulties with reading requirements
- Illness or Medical Condition (A letter from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist, certifying the difficulty to be engaged in full-time study is on file.)

SECTION C: To be Completed by Academic Advisor- Please Answer ALL Questions

I have reviewed the above information and it is consistent with my assessment of the student's situation. I support the student's request to take a reduced course load during the Fall Spring semester of _____ (year)

For how many credits will the student register during the period of reduced course load? _____

When will/did this student complete all degree requirements*? Choose one:

___/___/____ OR End of Fall/Spring/Summer term (circle one) in year: _____
mm dd yyyy (yyyy)

*Plan A Masters/PhD: Date that thesis/dissertation will be submitted to the graduate school. For Plan B Master's with exam, list exam date.

I certify that I have reviewed and completed this form, and that it reflects this student's academic standing within his/her degree program.

Name of Academic Advisor: _____ Phone or Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please verify ISSS approval before registering F/1 or J/1 students for reduced course load

I have reviewed this application and determined that the requested REDUCED COURSE LOAD requested IS IS NOT approved.

Name of DSO/ARO: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____