

# REDUCED COURSE LOAD

## Stay in Status, Stay on Track



### What is a Reduced Course Load?

F-1 students are required to pursue a “full course of study” every fall and spring semester; full-time in summer is only required when a student is admitted in the summer term. A Reduced Course Load (RCL) allows F-1 students to temporarily enroll in less than full-time course load with DSO approval and a valid reason.



### Reduced Course Load Regulations

1. A student's SEVIS record will be terminated if either of the following occur in the spring/fall semester or to a student who is admitted to begin a program in the summer.
  - a. Failure to enroll full-time at the beginning of the semester.
  - b. At anytime during the semester the student drops a course resulting in less than full-time enrollment without authorization from the ISSS office.
2. The authorization to enroll less than full-time does not impact a student's eligibility to take a reduced course load for a different reason.
3. Authorization for a reduced course load does not carry over to the next semester. Students are required to resubmit documentation when requesting a new reduced course load.
4. RCLs are not necessary for summer enrollment as there is no enrollment requirement for summer. Exception: Full-time enrollment is required for student whose first semester is summer.

### How to request an RCL?

1. F-1 Students must first complete the RCL form, located on the ISSS website, and have it signed by their academic/faculty advisor or medical professional.
2. Submit your RCL Request Form using the RCL Submission Portal.
3. A DSO will review the RCL form and if approved...
  - a. Provide the appropriate override in CATS WEB.
  - b. Report the RCL to SEVIS by updating the student's immigration record.
4. A DSO at ISSS will contact the student regarding the RCL decision or if further documentation is required
5. If approved, the student may enroll less than full-time or drop a course that results in less than full-time enrollment.
6. If denied, the student is not permitted to enroll less than full-time.

### Types of RCL:

#### When Is It Allowed?

#### Academic Difficulties

- Initial Language Difficulties
- Unfamiliar with U.S Teaching Methods
- Improper Course Placement
- Initial Difficulty with Reading Requirements

#### Medical Reasons

- Must Provide Documentation from a Licensed Medical Doctor, Psychiatrist, or Clinical Psychologist
- Can be used in non-consecutive terms

#### Thesis & Dissertation

- If you're in your last semester and don't need a full course load to graduate
- Must be enrolled in at least one required class.

#### Final Term of Study

- If you're in your last semester and don't need a full course load to graduate
- Must be enrolled in at least one required class.
- **You can only utilize this justification twice.**