



Virginia International University
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Reduced Course Load (RCL) Authorization Form

USCIS regulations require international students to be enrolled in a full course of study while pursuing a degree in the United States under an F-1 student visa. Full-time enrollment is usually defined as 12 credits for a Bachelor's and undergraduate certificate and 9 credits for a Master's degree and graduate certificate per semester; however, your program office dictates the actual number of credits necessary to maintain proper enrollment. Student should **NOT** drop any coursework until after obtaining approval from the International Student Service Office. The **Reduced Course Load (RCL)** authorization indicates **maintenance of an F-1 status only**, it does **NOT** change student's records in the **Registrar's Office**. **IMPORTANT:** The student must resume a full course of study at the next available semester (excluding the Summer) in order to maintain student status. Also, imminent danger of failing a class is not a permissible reason for authorizing a reduced course load.

A. To be completed by the student:

Student ID No.: _____ Program of Study: _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____
 Street City State Zip

Phone No.: (____) _____ - _____, E-mail: _____

Completion Date on Current I-20: _____

(Student's Signature) _____ Date _____

B. To be completed by the Academic Advisor:

Please provide us with the basic information requested below by indicating the appropriate reason for reduced course load.
 # of Credits earned to date: _____ Anticipated Completion Date: _____ Semester RCL Requested: _____

Reason for Reduced Course Load (RCL):

I recommend that this student be certified full-time for the above semester, based on the following.

- Completion of Course of Study:** The Student is in the final semester or session and fewer courses are need to complete the course of study, therefore DSO may authorize a reduced course load during the last semester. [8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)(B)].
- Medical Conditions:** The student is prevented by a medical condition from pursuing a full course of study. A letter from a licensed medical doctor or licensed clinical psychologist residing in the United States must be attached. **The letter should include:** (a) description of the medical problem, including how this affects the student's ability to study; (b) details of treatment; (c) recommendation of when the student may resume taking full-time course work. [8 CFR 214.2(f)(5)(iv)]. ISSO must re-authorize the drop below full-course of study each semester, and new documentation must be provided. (Total time cannot exceed 12 months per degree program). Student has to fill out the **Leave of Absence form**, and submit it to ISSO at the beginning of the semester.
- Academic Difficulties:** Student has initial academic difficulties that make full time registration unreasonable. Student is facing initial difficulties with the English language or reading requirements, unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods, or improper course level placement. [8CFR 214.2(f)(6)(iii)]. **(One time exception only - must be used in the student's first term at VIU).** Student must be registered for a minimum of 6 credit hours. The student must resume a full course of study at the next available semester (excluding the Summer) in order to maintain student status. A student previously authorized to drop below a full course of study due to academic difficulties is NOT eligible for a second authorization at that program.

Please explain appropriate reason: _____

Annual Vacation: All F-1 students are required to attend Fall and Spring semesters, summer is the ONLY semester for F-1 students to take off. No prior approval is needed to take the Summer term off for eligible students.

COMMENTS (continue on back, if necessary): _____

I endorse and recommend less than full-time registration for the semester requested for this student. This request for permission is based on the reason indicated above.

Signature of School Dean: _____ Date: _____

C. To be completed by DSO or Int'l Student Advisor:

- RCL Approval Granted** **RCL Approval Denied**

Signature of DSO: _____ Date: _____