Reduced Course Load (RCL) Information

F-1 students must register for a full course of study (at least 12 credit hours) every Fall and Spring semester, with at least 9 credits in-person or blended/hybrid, to maintain F-1 status.

There are a few instances in which an F-1 student may be eligible for a reduced course load.

1. **Academic Difficulty** due to one of the following reasons (first semester Associate degree students only):
   a. Improper course level placement
   b. Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods

   Students authorized for a reduced course load for **Academic Difficulty** on their I-20 may withdraw to a **minimum of 6 credit hours** in the term of the authorization. Withdrawing or receiving FW or FN grades below 6 credit hours with this type of reduced course load will result in the termination of your SEVIS record. A full course of study must be resumed in the following semester, if a Fall or Spring semester. An F-1 student is eligible for a reduced course load for **Academic Difficulty** only one semester.

2. **Illness or Medical Condition**
   a. Cannot exceed 12 months (two Fall/Spring semesters) of this authorization at each program level (ex: Associate)
   b. To receive authorization, students must submit the Medical Reduced Course Load form, filled and signed by one of the below professionals:
      - Medical Doctor (MD)
      - Doctor of Osteopathy (DO)
      - Licensed Clinical Psychologist (LCP or PsyD)

   The Medical Reduced Course Load form must be signed by one of the above professionals. This is a federal F-1 regulation. Documentation signed by a Physician’s Assistant (PA), Clinical Nurse Practitioner (CNP), Licensed Practical Counselor (LPC), etc., will be rejected.

3. **To Complete Course of Study in Current Term**
   a. Can be used by students in their very last semester of their program, if less than 12 credits are needed to complete the program

   A student authorized for a reduced course load to complete their course of study in current (final) term, must fulfill the in-person coursework requirement. If only one 3-credit course is required, this 3-credit course must be either on-campus or blended/hybrid. If two 3-credit courses are required (6 total credits), at least one of these courses must be either on-campus or blended/hybrid.

All reduced course load options require permission from the International Student Advisor in advance.

You may not drop below 12 credit hours without prior authorization for a reduced course load as documented on page 2 of your I-20.