



EAST CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

Valid Reasons for F-1 Students to Drop Below Full-time Status

F-1 students are required to maintain full-time student status every semester they are in the United States. Undergraduate students are expected to complete 12 hours of course work during the fall and spring semesters. Graduate students need to complete 9 hours whether they have a 25% assistantship (or not) or 6 hours if they have a 50% assistantship. The Immigration Regulations only allow limited reasons for a student to carry less than full-time load.

GENERAL EXCEPTIONS

- **Undergraduate students in their final semester** [8CFR 214.2(f)(6)(iii)(C)]. An undergraduate who needs fewer than 12 hours to complete his or her program of study may only enroll for the number of credit hours necessary for completion and still be considered to be pursuing a full course of study.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- **Medical problems** [8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(iii)(B)]. A student who is compelled by illness or other medical conditions to interrupt or reduce a full course of study is considered to be in status if DSO secures the appropriate documentation prior to withdrawing or dropping classes. The student must resume a full course of study the following semester upon recovery. **Requirement:** Valid medical excuses must be documented with official letter from a medical professional (e.g., medical doctor, licensed psychologist, etc.) that includes a brief diagnosis and a recommendation for the student to drop or withdraw from classes.) The medical condition cannot exceed 12 months per program level.
- **Valid academic reasons** [8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(iii)(A)]. There are 3 categories of valid academic reasons:
 1. **Initial difficulties with the English language or reading requirements.** Usually this exception is applied for the beginning semester in the U.S.
 2. **Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods.** Usually this exception is applied for the beginning semester in the U.S.
 3. **Improper course level placement.** This phrase is generally interpreted to mean that a student does not have the proper prerequisites, which were required for the course. It has also been applied to cases where it can be documented that the student does not have the proper preparation or background for taking a class. **Requirement:** the professor or academic advisor must verify improper course level placement.

Special note to the F-1 student: Before dropping any class, we recommend that you discuss your situation with the professor and /or your academic advisor. Due to the new SEVIS requirements, it is essential that you obtain permission from the DSO **prior** to dropping or withdrawing from classes. The permission for a reduced course load will be noted on page 3 of your Form I-20. The normal procedures for dropping a class must be followed according to the instructions in the current OSU Class Schedule.

- Incompletes (I) and correspondence courses do not count toward full-time enrollment.
- Extension courses may count toward full-time enrollment if completed by the end of the current semester.



EAST CENTRAL UNIVERSITY
Request for Less Than Full-time Enrollment
(Must Be Completed Prior to Last to Drop Courses Deadline)

1. TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT:

Family Name _____ First Name _____

Local Address _____ Phone: _____

Email Address: _____ College _____ Major _____

Degree: BS _____ MS _____ Date of first entry into the U.S. _____

SEVIS ID# _____ ECU ID# _____

IMPORTANT: I understand that in order to receive the Non-resident Tuition Waiver I am responsible for contacting the Financial Aid Director (Admin. RM 101), to advise of my reduced course load and request an exception as I will not be enrolled a full 12 hours (undergrad) or 9 hours (graduate).

Student Signature _____ Date _____

2. TO BE COMPLETED BY ACADEMIC ADVISOR:

In general, permission to enroll in less than a full-time should occur rarely in a student's career. According to the USCIS regulations the international student should be full-time during each fall and spring semester. However, there are special circumstances where a student with permission could take a reduced full course of study. See reserve side for more details.

Semester requested _____ Intended Number of hours enrolled after dropping class _____

Course prefix(s) and number(s) student wishes to drop _____

Please indicate the appropriate reason for dropping a course(s):

- ☐ The student is having difficulty with English language or reading requirements. (Applicable first semester only)
- ☐ The student is unfamiliar with American teaching methods. (Applicable first semester only)
- ☐ The student has been placed in the improper course level. (Prerequisites were needed)
- ☐ The student has a medical reason for needing to be enrolled less than full-time (Attach medical documents)
- ☐ Other: _____

I recommend less than full-time enrollment for this student during the semester requested.

Remarks: _____

Academic Advisor _____ Print Name _____ Date _____
Signature

Phone # _____ Email: _____

3. TO BE COMPLETED BY THE DSO, INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OFFICE, 152 ADMIN BLDG:

☐ Approved **OR** ☐ Not Approved, Why Not?: _____

Print Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____