



Reduced Course Load Form for F-1 International Students

International and Off-Campus Studies

General Information:

All St. Olaf College international students are required to maintain F-1 status while in the U.S. To maintain F-1 status, you must enroll full-time Fall, Interim, and Spring of your first year and every Fall and Spring semester thereafter. Students are required to enroll in a full course of study with a minimum of 3.0 credits each semester. Summer enrollment is not required by the F-1 regulations. Note: St. Olaf College requires students to complete three separate January full-credit (1.0) Interim courses to graduate. This could be an on or off campus course, internship, independent study, or independent research for credit.

International students are required to maintain full-time enrollment; if you cannot or will not meet this requirement, you must request a reduced course load. According to 8 CFR § 214.2(f)(6)(iii), the Designated School Official (Visa Coordinator) may allow an F-1 student to engage in less than a full course of study in some circumstances, as explained below. **A student who wishes to drop below full time must obtain approval from the Visa Coordinator in advance, regardless of what the reason might be.** If you drop below full time without authorization you will be considered out of status, your SEVIS record will be terminated and you will lose your F-1 status.

Immigration Approved Reasons to Drop Below Full-time:

- Immigration regulations specify four academic difficulty reasons for which a reduced course load (RCL) may be approved:
 - Initial difficulties with the English language (first year students only)
 - Initial difficulties with reading requirements (first year students only)
 - Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods (first year students only)
 - Improper course level placement
- Immigration regulations allow for a RCL if, due to a temporary illness or medical condition, he/she is unable to be enrolled full time (or, if necessary, no course load). A RCL for medical reasons can be granted for no longer than 12 months during one degree level. Please complete this form each semester a RCL is needed.
- Immigration regulations allow for a RCL if in his/her final semester fewer courses are needed and required to complete the degree program.
- Please be advised that a lack of financial support and incompletes from a previous semester do not constitute valid reasons to have a RCL according to immigration regulations.

NOTE: If approved for a reduced course load, you are still eligible for on-campus employment benefits.

Please read this form carefully before signing. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask the Visa Coordinator.

Name: _____
Last/Family/Surname *First/Given* *Middle*

U.S. Cellphone: _____ Non-St. Olaf e-mail: _____

Major(s) and Concentration(s): _____

Current Graduation Date: _____ Anticipated Graduation Date (if it will change due to RCL): _____

Semester requesting reduced course load: _____, 20_____
Fall or Spring

Course(s) you will drop: _____ New credit load: _____

I certify that I have read the request form instructions and information in full, and to the best of my knowledge, the information I have provided is accurate. I understand that this request is for a specified semester only and I must continue to maintain my F-1 status while on a reduced course load.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Full Name _____

Reason for Reduced Course Load (Please check 1 reason and submit required documentation with this form):

I will graduate at the end of this semester and need fewer than 3 credits to complete my degree.

Student must have approval from the Dean of Students Office and the Visa Coordinator must receive confirmation via e-mail of this prior to authorizing the RCL.

I have a temporary illness or medical condition which limits my ability to study full-time.

A letter from a licensed medical physician, doctor of osteopathy or licensed clinical psychologist on letterhead, recommending a RCL on the basis of a medical condition for which you have received care is required. The letter need not detail the diagnosis or treatment but must specify whether the recommendation is for part-time study or no study (0 credits) and the dates for which it is recommended. The letter cannot be dated more than 30 days before the start of the semester for which the RCL is requested.

I am having academic difficulty but will be enrolled for at least half the required full-time course load.

A letter from your academic advisor recommending the RCL on the basis of [insert one of the four difficulty reasons below] and elaborating on the circumstances is required.

- Initial difficulties with the English language
- Initial difficulties with reading requirements
- Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods
- Improper course level placement

After you submit this form and supporting documents to the Visa Coordinator, she will determine your eligibility for a RCL, report your RCL in SEVIS, and generate a new form I-20 for you.