Name of Policy: Reduced Course Load for F-1 Status International Students
Source: Academic Affairs
Date Revised: May 2024
Form to Complete: F-1 Request for a Reduced Course Load Form; see Registrar's office

Policy:

International students in F-1 status are required to maintain full-time enrollment (12 credit hours per semester) during the school year. If the student cannot or will not meet this requirement, the student must request a reduced course load. Federal immigration regulations severely limit a student's ability to be less than full time, but it **may** be allowed in some circumstances as explained below. If the student drops below 12 credit hours at **any time** without obtaining prior approval and documentation from the Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) or Designated School Official (DSO), as designated by SEVIS, the student's record will be terminated in SEVIS, and the student will be considered out of status. Upon termination, the student has 15 days to leave the country before being considered in violation of F-1 status.

Regulations permit the consideration of international students in F-1 status to request a reduced course load only for the following reasons:

- Academic difficulties (only permitted before the college withdrawal deadline—11th week of classes). A student may be authorized for a reduced course load due to "academic difficulties" only for a single term and must resume a full course of study during the next standard semester. Academic difficulties are defined as:
    1. Initial difficulties with the English language (allowable only in student's first year);
    2. Initial difficulties with reading requirements (allowable only in student's first year);

3. Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods; or
4. Improper course level placement.

- Medical Conditions – Documentation is required.
- If the student's final term requires less than a full-time course load to complete the degree requirements.

Per the KCAI academic calendar, changes to course enrollment may be requested:

- Through the 5th day of each academic semester. Students are permitted to add/drop courses without penalty and dropped courses will not appear on the student's transcript.
- After the 5th day of the semester and through the withdrawal deadline (11th week of classes). Withdrawn courses will appear on a student's transcript with a notation of "W" and will not be calculated in the grade point average.
- After the withdrawal deadline (11th week of classes). The student can obtain a Request for Late Withdrawal form from the PDSO/DSO. Requests for a reduced course load following the withdrawal deadline will be based upon documented medical needs only. However, complete withdrawals following the withdrawal deadline will be considered for medical and special extenuating circumstances. Please refer to the Request for Late Withdrawal Policy and Procedures for more information.

PROCEDURE:

1. Student obtains **F-1 Request for Reduced Course Load form** from the Registrar's office.
2. Prior to the withdrawal deadline, the PDSO/DSO will approve/disapprove the request for reduced course load. If the request is approved during add/drop week, the student can complete the course drop on MyKCAI. During the withdrawal period, the DSO will sign the Course Withdrawal form obtained from the Registrar and student will complete all steps needed for course withdrawal.
3. After the withdrawal deadline, if the PDSO/DSO approves, the student will be referred to the Vice President and Dean of Student and will complete all steps needed to request a late course withdrawal.