

International students on F-1 visa are required to take a full course load during Fall and Spring semesters. In the event the student does not intend to take a full course load, they must get prior approval from the IPS advisor. Please note:

- The IPS advisor is authorized to approve less than full course load for students on F-1 visa status **only** under the guidelines of exceptions allowed by federal regulations,
- A maximum of one exception in the first year of study for academic difficulties will be approved (except for medical condition, concurrent enrollment, and thesis/dissertation),
- F-1 students are advised to read the following descriptions and required documentation needed for each exception. International Programs and Services will not consider any incomplete form or documentation.

1. Academic Difficulties

- Unfamiliarity with US teaching methods
- Difficulty with English language (including reading requirements)
- Improper course level placement

Required Documentation:

The student needs to provide a letter from the academic advisor and/or instructor confirming that the student is eligible for the above exception based on the evaluation of the student's academic performance or records.

2. Medical Condition

Applicable to serious medical conditions which restrict the student's ability to attend classes and pursue a full-time course of study. Available for a maximum of one year.

Required Documentation:

The student must provide formal documentation from a physician or licensed mental health practitioner. This documentation must be on the physician's or practitioner's letterhead and submitted each semester.

3. Completion of Course of Study (Final Semester at MTU)

Applicable to students who are in their last semester at MTU, allowing them to take only the courses required to complete their degree program.

Required Documentation:

A letter from the academic advisor confirming the anticipated completion date for their program.

4. Concurrent Enrollment (Transient Student)

F-1 students are allowed to take a limited number of credits at other institutions. The IPS advisor may not approve a reduced course load if the student is taking more than 6 credits at another school, or is enrolled in more than 3 credits of on-line courses. The student is required to submit the transfer grades to MTU when the semester is completed.

Required Documentation:

- A copy of current enrollment record.
- A copy of registration at the transient school, including student name, school name, semester, course name, course number and credits.
- Letter from your MTU academic adviser approving the course(s) for transfer to MTU for the semester.

5. Thesis and Dissertation

Graduate students may register for 1 credit of thesis after they have completed their required course work and 6 credit hours of thesis for master students, or 3 credit hours of dissertation for doctoral students. Thesis or dissertation advisor must verify that the student is making satisfactory progress, and sign this form.

6. Semester-Off Authorization (Non-Traditional Vacation Term)

If a student is planning to take a semester off, the IPS is required to report this to the SEVIS system. Summer is the traditional semester off and does not need to be reported. This form must be used PRIOR to taking spring or fall semester off. To be eligible, students must have been full-time for two previous and consecutive semesters, and receive approval from their academic program or graduate advisor.

Required Documentation:

Completed and approved *Semester-Off Authorization Form*.

This form is used by F-1 students who intend to take less than a full course load. An approved reduced course load must consist of at least six credits, except for medical conditions. The form must be completed and submitted to the IPS advisor. The student must not drop/withdraw below a full course of study without prior approval of the IPS advisor. Any less than full course load without the approval of the IPS advisor will be considered an out of status situation. Students need to submit a new Reduced Course Load form each semester that he/she plans to be enrolled less than full-time.

Date Requested: _____ Semester: _____

The following reasons are the only applicable: (check one)

- Illness or Medical condition (medical documentation)
- Improper course level placement (Academic Advisor)
- Initial difficulty with reading requirements (Academic Advisor)
- Initial difficulty with the English language (Academic Advisor)
- Concurrent enrollment (Academic Advisor)
- To complete course of study in current term (Academic Advisor)
- Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods (Academic Advisor)
- Thesis/dissertation (Academic Advisor)
- Semester-Off Authorization (Academic Advisor) – Also requires “[Semester-Off Authorization](#)” form

Student Info

Family Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____

MTU ID #: _____ SEVIS ID #: _____

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ Country of Citizenship: _____

Preferred E-mail Address: _____

Education Information

Education Level: Bachelor Master Doctoral Non-degree

Major: _____ College: _____

Credit hour enrollment this semester at MTU: _____

Concurrent School Name and Phone Number: _____

Student Signature

Name

Date

ACADEMIC ADVISOR APPROVAL

The student is eligible to register less than full-time for the following reason:

- Improper course level placement (Academic Advisor)
- Initial difficulty with reading requirements (Academic Advisor)
- Initial difficulty with the English language (Academic Advisor)
- Concurrent enrollment (Academic Advisor)
- To complete course of study in current term (Academic Advisor)
- Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods (Academic Advisor)
- Semester-Off Authorization (Academic Advisor) – Also requires “Semester-Off Authorization” form

Academic Advisor Name (Please Print)

Academic Advisor Signature

Date

THESIS OR DISSERTATION CREDIT APPROVAL (Graduate Students)

The student is eligible to register for thesis or dissertation credits. They are making progress toward completion of their thesis or dissertation.

Thesis/Dissertation Advisor Name (Please Print)

Thesis/Dissertation Advisor Signature

Date

For IPS Office Only

Check one: _____ Approved _____ Denied

Number of Hours Approved: _____

Immigration Advisor/DSO Signature: _____ Date: _____