

# International Student Underload Request Form

**IMPORTANT: Please read the back of this form before proceeding with this request.**

**To be completed by the student** (do not omit any information)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print) Family/Last Given/First

Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to (choose one):

- Register for less than full-time enrollment for the \_\_\_\_\_ semester for \_\_\_\_\_ credit hours.  
 Drop course(s) # \_\_\_\_\_ resulting in \_\_\_\_\_ credit hours.

I understand that if no authorized exception applies, I may still request an override in CATS; however, if I then register for or drop to less than full-time enrollment, I will be out of lawful F-1 status and must either apply to DHS for reinstatement, which could result in denial and possible deportation, or exit the U.S. and reenter with a new I-20 for a new program of study.

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Graduate students with a non thesis option in **Computer Science or Software Engineering** who are planning to register for less than 9 credit hours in the semester indicated above must agree to the following:

- "I understand that I must register for and take all remaining sections of my comprehensive exam during the semester indicated above in order to maintain lawful F-1 status."

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## To be completed by the International Office

- Engaged in authorized practical training for the \_\_\_\_\_ semester  
 Illness or medical condition (documentation required)  
 Concurrently enrolled at \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ credit hours (documentation required)  
 Correspondence Course # \_\_\_\_\_ Date Enrolled: \_\_\_\_\_ Expected to complete by \_\_\_\_\_  
 Initial difficulties with the English language, reading requirements, or in adjusting to the U.S. educational system

DSO signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## To be completed by an Instructor, Academic Advisor, Chair, or Dean

I agree with this student's request for underload authorization based on the following exception (please choose one):  
If you do not agree or have comments, please explain below.

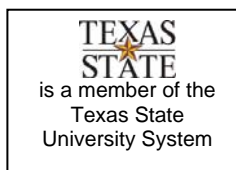
- Concurrently enrolled in the Texas State Intensive English Program for \_\_\_\_\_ course(s)  
 This student needs a lesser course load to complete the degree program during the current term. Note: Graduate students must register for and take all remaining sections of their comprehensive exam during the semester indicated in the first box above in order to maintain lawful F-1 status **OR the department must indicate below that the student is in formal preparation for the comprehensive.**  
 This student is a graduate student whose required formal coursework has been completed and who is (please check one):  
 preparing for comprehensive examinations or  engaged in thesis or dissertation work  
 Academic Difficulties – there are three types of academic difficulties that are listed below (**please circle one**):  
**Please note:** A student authorized to drop below a full course of study due to academic difficulties is not eligible for a second authorization for academic difficulties during their degree program.  
1) Initial difficulty with the English language or reading requirements  
2) Unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods  
3) Improper course level placement. Failing a course could indicate that the student was placed at an improper course level, however, this category should only be used if the student has completed required assignments and exams and if s/he has not had excessive absences that could have affected his or her performance in the class.

\*I disagree/have comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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International Office - Hill House  
TEL: (512) 245-7966 FAX: (512) 245-8264  
[International@txstate.edu](mailto:International@txstate.edu)



**International Office use only**  
Semester: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
Input Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
DSO Initials: \_\_\_\_\_  
SEVIS Reportable? No Yes  
FsaATLAS Entry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

International students who are admitted to the United States in F-1 status are required by the Department of Homeland Security or DHS (formerly INS) to maintain the terms and conditions of their nonimmigrant status. Failure to do so can result in deportation. One of the requirements for maintaining F-1 status is to pursue a "full course of study" every semester, not including the summer break. A "full course of study" is considered full-time study, which at Texas State University is defined as **9 credit hours for graduate and non-degree graduate students** and **12 credit hours for undergraduates**.

At Texas State, CATS is programmed to help our F-1 students maintain lawful status by preventing them from enrolling for less than full-time. There are, however, specific authorized exceptions to the full-course-of-study rule in which case DHS considers F-1 students to be maintaining status even if they are not enrolled full-time. A course load that falls below the full-time requirement, i.e. an underload, requires approval from a DHS Designated School Official (DSO). F-1 students must first complete this form and return it to the International Office to request an override in CATS. *After the International Office has entered the override, the student is responsible for completing their registration or drop procedures on CATS.*

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DHS makes an allowance for two primary sets of circumstances in which international students may drop below full-time hours and still maintain legal status. Most situations involve dropping below full time hours after having enrolled in a full course of study. The International Office is required to report to the DHS students who drop below full-time hours for the reasons specified in #1 and #2 below.

**1) Health Reasons**

If a doctor or licensed counselor is willing to recommend that you drop below full-time hours for health reasons, then you may do so for up to a cumulative total of 12 months and still be considered in status.

**2) Academic Reasons**

- a) Initial difficulty with the English language and/or reading requirements or
- b) Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods or the US educational system.
- c) Improper course placement (This means that after enrolling in the course, you discover that you do not have the proper background for the course. Failing grades (Fs) in the course can be considered evidence of improper course placement.)

✘ Authorization for a reduced course load based on an academic reason listed above may be used only once during your degree program. If you use an academic reason more than once, you will violate the terms of your F-1 status and must apply for reinstatement to DHS or leave the U.S. and reenter using a new I-20.

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Besides the two primary types of circumstances mentioned above, there are several other circumstances in which international students can be below hours yet still be considered full time and still maintain legal status. These cases often occur when you are unable to initially register for full-time hours. The International Office is not required to report students who are below full-time hours for reasons #1 through #5 below to the DHS.

- 1) You are concurrently enrolling in the Texas State Intensive English Program for a combined total of hours that amounts to a full course of study.
- 2) You are concurrently enrolling at another school (ACC, for example) for a combined total of credit hours that amounts to a full course of study. Evidence of completion of the coursework will be required.
- 3) You are a graduate student who has completed all required coursework, and are completing a thesis or comprehensive exams. **Please note:** you must continue to maintain normal progress when completing your thesis or exams.
- 4) You are completing your final semester and need fewer courses to complete your course of study.
- 5) You are participating in full-time authorized practical training (Curricular Practical Training or Optional Practical Training).

**Please note: If the above descriptions of types of circumstances do not clearly address your situation, you may need to make an appointment through the International Office reception desk to speak with an IO advisor about your options.**

**Please note: If you enroll in a correspondence course**

**You must complete the course or you will lose your F-1 status**