
Less than Full Time

F-1 student status requires that you be always enrolled on a full-time basis. However, there are three exceptions to the full-time study rule. You must obtain special permission from OISS **prior** to reducing your course load.

Academic Exceptions

A student encountering academic difficulties due to one or more of the reasons below may be authorized by OISS for less than full-time course load. This authorization is valid only for one semester (usually in the first year) and you must resume a full course of study in the next available semester.

- initial English language difficulties or reading requirements
- unfamiliarity with U.S. teaching methods
- improper course level placement

To reduce your course load based on an academic exception, you must request approval from OISS prior to dropping below full-time study. You can do this by completing the [Reduced Course Load based on Academic Exception Request Form](#) [1], which must be signed by your Academic Dean.

Final Semester Exception

A student needing less than full-time enrollment in the **final** semester of program to complete degree requirements may study less than full-time. This information will flow to OISS through the Student Information System reporting your final semester course load, so prior approval in most cases is not required. However, remember that once you are registered less than full-time based on the final semester, extensions of your I-20 to continue the program are not permitted.

Illness or Medical Condition

If a student has a temporary illness or medical condition that prevents or interferes with full-time study, a student is eligible for a period of authorized reduced course load for up to an aggregate total of 12 months for each academic program. Prior approval from OISS is required. You must submit the following to OISS:

- A written statement from a Yale Health physician requiring or recommending an interruption or reduction in studies
- Written confirmation from the school or department that the student is dropping below full-time due to a temporary illness or medical condition

Again, it is important to talk with your OISS adviser prior to dropping below a full course of study.

Source URL: <https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/f-1-and-j-1-students/requirements-in-detail/less-than-full-time>

Links

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Published on Office of International Students & Scholars (<https://oiss.yale.edu>)

[1] <https://yale.app.box.com/v/full-time-exception>