

Reduced Course Load (RCL) Form

Request to enroll below full-time enrollment

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Purpose of this form

Use this form to request authorization from International Student Services (ISS) to enroll below a full course of study for an allowable F-1 Reduced Course Load reason.

Important - Do NOT drop a course before ISS approval

Do not drop or withdraw from any course until your RCL request has been reviewed and approved by ISS.

RCL Help & Instructions

Scan the following QR code for instructions, eligibility, examples, and FAQs:



1 Full-Time Enrollment at a Glance

Undergraduate

12 credit hours

Graduate

9 credit hours

UG Border Commuter

At least 6 hours

Grad Border Commuter

At least 3 hours

Fall and spring are required enrollment terms. Summer enrollment is optional when it is not the student's first semester. Financial difficulty is not an allowable reason for a Reduced Course Load.

2 Student Information

Last name

First name

UTRGV ID

UTRGV email

Major / academic program

Student level

Border commuter?

☐ Undergraduate ☐ Graduate

☐ Yes ☐ No

3 RCL Request Details

Requested term

Year

Planned credit hours after RCL

☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Summer

Select ONE cause for the Reduced Course Load

☐ Academic difficulty ☐ Concurrent enrollment ☐ Final semester ☐ Medical reason

Which cause should you choose?

- **Academic Difficulty:** First-semester academic adjustment issues.
- **Concurrent Enrollment:** Taking courses at another institution while maintaining full-time combined enrollment.
- **Final Semester:** Fewer hours needed to finish degree requirements.
- **Medical Reason:** Medical documentation supports a reduced course load.

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RCL reason details | Complete only the section selected

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Important - Advisor/Program Coordinator Use ONLY

Sections A–D must be completed only by the student's Academic Advisor or Program Coordinator.

This form is maintained by International Student Services as documentation supporting the student's Reduced Course Load authorization. The information provided may be used to demonstrate compliance with U.S. immigration regulations and may be reviewed by federal officials during an audit or inspection of the student's immigration record.

By completing the applicable section, you are confirming that you have reviewed the student's circumstances and are providing the academic information requested to support the RCL request.

A Academic Difficulty

An academic-difficulty RCL may be authorized only for the reasons listed below. This type of RCL is allowed only once per degree level, and the student must maintain at least 6 credit hours.

Select one qualifying reason:

- ☐ Initial difficulties with the English language or reading requirements (1st semester only).
- ☐ Unfamiliarity with American teaching methods (1st semester only).
- ☐ Advised to drop an improper course-level placement course. Failing a course is not a reason to drop.

Subject

Course Number

Section

Brief explanation of why the course placement is improper

B Concurrent Enrollment

Use this section when enrollment at UTRGV and another SEVP-approved school will combine to a full course of study and the outside classes will count toward degree requirements.

Other institution

Other institution hours

UTRGV hours

Combined hours

REQUIRED documentation attachment checklist

- ☐ Concurrent Enrollment Letter
- ☐ Class Schedule from other institution

Sections C and D on Page 3

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RCL reason details - continued | Academic verification

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C Final Semester

Complete this section only when the requested RCL is connected to the student's final semester or completion of formal graduate coursework.

Select one qualifying reason:

- ☐ Final semester - Fewer than full-time hours are required to complete the degree.
- ☐ Graduate student completing formal coursework this semester and beginning thesis/dissertation next semester.
- ☐ Graduate student who completed formal coursework and is preparing for comprehensive exams.
- ☐ Graduate student who completed formal coursework and is involved in thesis or dissertation.

Expected degree completion date or semester

D Medical Reason

Use this section when a temporary medical condition prevents you from maintaining a full course load. Medical RCL authorization is limited to a maximum of 12 months per program level.

Required credits

Term

REQUIRED documentation attachment checklist

☐

Medical recommendation letter

4 Academic Advisor / Program Coordinator Certification

Acknowledgment

By signing below, I confirm that I have reviewed the selected RCL reason and the student's enrollment plan. I have advised the student of any potential impact on academic progress and projected degree completion.

Advisor / Program Coordinator name

Job title

Department / program

UTRGV email

Signature

Date

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Student acknowledgment | Submission

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5 Student Acknowledgment

Acknowledgment

By signing below, I certify that the information provided in this request is complete and accurate. I understand that I must not drop or withdraw from any course until I receive RCL approval from International Student Services. I understand that any approved withdrawal must be completed by me through the appropriate process. I understand that an approved RCL may result in an updated Form I-20 and may affect my program end date. I also understand that if I withdraw from the semester, I will not be eligible to continue on-campus employment.

Student Signature

Date

6 Final Step - Submit to ISS

Before submitting, confirm that:

- The student information and selected RCL reason are complete.
- The applicable Page 2 or 3 section and required attachments are complete.
- The Academic Advisor / Program Coordinator certification is complete.
- The student acknowledgment is signed.

Submit the complete request and supporting documents to International Student Services at international@utrgv.edu.

Do not reduce your enrollment until ISS confirms that your Reduced Course Load has been authorized.