University of Alabama at Birmingham
International Student & Scholar Services

Academic Advisor Certification for F-1/J-1 Students Taking Less Than a Full Courseload Due to Academic Difficulties

NOTE: THIS FORM AUTHORIZES A STUDENT TO ENGAGE IN LESS THAN A FULL COURSE OF STUDY, BUT IT DOES NOT GRANT PERMISSION TO TAKE A TERM OFF. A STUDENT WHO DROPS BELOW A FULL COURSE OF STUDY WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE FOREIGN STUDENT ADVISOR IS CONSIDERED OUT OF STATUS.

______________________________________________________________________________
(Student’s Name – please print) (Student Number)

Email Address: _____________________________________ Phone: _____________________

Academic Advisor’s Name _____________________________________ Today’s Date: __________________________

Requested Term for Reduced Course Load: Semester: Fall _____ Spring_____ Summer _____ Year: 20 _____

This student is in the United States in F-1/J-1 status, and is bound by U.S. Federal regulations that require full-time study during the academic year. Full-time study is defined as twelve semester hours of registration for undergraduate students and nine semester hours for graduate students.

There are circumstances that justify enrollment for fewer hours but students must be enrolled at least half time (5-6 credits for graduates or 6 for undergraduates). Please note: During the course of study within one program level, a student can only be authorized on one occasion to reduce his or her course load due to academic difficulties. An exception may apply to students with a confirmed medical condition.

Since you are in the best position to supply information about this student’s academic situation, we are asking you to indicate which of the following situations, if any, explains why the student is not currently registered for a full course of study. Please check the item that applies. If you wish to add comments, please do so on the bottom of this sheet. Quotations are from 8CFR 214.2 (f)(6)(iii), which includes justifications that are open to interpretation.

I recommend that this student be considered engaged in less than a full course load for the following reason:

_____ He/she has initial difficulty with the English language or reading requirements

_____ He/she is unfamiliar with U.S. teaching methods

_____ He/she has been advised to drop a course because of improper course level placement

Academic Advisor’s Signature ___________________________ DSO/Foreign Student Advisor ___________________________

Comments: ____________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Please see other side for medical, graduate, and final term exemptions.
GRADUATE STUDENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR COURSEWORK

Graduate students engaged in preparation for comprehensive examinations or thesis/dissertation activities after completion of coursework must have this form endorsed by their Academic Advisor, Department Chair and Foreign Student Advisor. If approved, students must be enrolled, but are not required to take a full course load.

_____ Is preparing to take a comprehensive examination (i.e. qualifying examination before progressing to thesis/dissertation – not GRE, GMAT, or other extraneous examinations).

_____ Has completed all course work and is engaged in thesis or dissertation activities.

________________________________________  _________________________
Academic Advisor or Supervising Professor  Department Chair

_______________________________________
DSO/Foreign Student Advisor

Comments: ___________________________________________________________________

FINAL TERM

This authorization is for the term in which the student is graduating. The student must meet program requirements for graduation and enroll in at least 1 credit hour. Graduate school policy may require a minimum of 3 credit hours.

_____ He/She is expected to complete all degree requirements this semester

________________________________________  _________________________
Academic Advisor  DSO/Foreign Student Advisor

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Students having a confirmed and documented medical condition may be authorized a reduced course load for a period not to exceed an aggregate of 12 months while the student is pursuing a course of study at a particular program level. A student may be authorized a reduced course load for a reason of illness or medical condition on more than one occasion while pursuing a course of study, so long as the aggregate period of that authorization does not exceed 12 months. Students must attach a written recommendation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist.

_____ He/she has a medical condition documented by a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist.

_______________________________________
DSO/Foreign Student Advisor

UAB/ISSS-AcadAdvCertF1Students