

International Student and Scholar Office
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FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

As you are aware, students in F-1 Immigration status must be enrolled full time. But what exactly does that mean? For undergraduate students, you must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credit hours each semester (fall and spring).

What if I begin the semester with 12 credits, but want to withdraw from a course later in the semester?

Students must **complete** a minimum of 12 credit hours each semester. Withdrawing from a course which leaves you with fewer than 12 credits is a violation of F-1 status. (That is why we generally recommend that students try to start the semester with at least 15 credits.) F-1 students must visit the ISSO before they withdraw from any class after the schedule adjustment period for that semester.

What if my professor is making a recommendation based on University policies and is likely considering the damage a bad grade would have on my GPA?

Your professor is making that recommendation based on University policies and is likely considering the damage a bad grade would have on your GPA. However, your professor is not aware of the immigration regulations. You should contact your ISSO advisor because of the Immigration regulations.

Do CLEP tests and other Credit for Prior Learning count toward full-time enrollment?

Since CLEP (College Level Examination Program) tests and other Credit for Prior Learning through departmental exams involve awarding credit for knowledge that you have already obtained, these credits are not earned by "being actively enrolled" in a course. Therefore, you only times when you are actively enrolled in a course. If you earned 12 credits during a particular semester, if some of those credits were earned via exam rather than coursework, you would not be considered a full-time student for Immigration purposes.

What if I take 9 credits during the spring semester and 3 credits during the summer?

Full-time enrollment does NOT mean 24 credits per year or an average of 12 credits each semester. Immigration regulations also require that students must be enrolled for a full course of study (12 credits) each semester.

Do online classes count toward my full-time enrollment?

One online class per semester may count toward your full-time enrollment.

What if I am in my final semester and I need fewer than 12 credits to complete my degree?

In the final semester of your undergraduate program, you are allowed to be less than full-time so long as you will be completing all degree requirements. If you are in your final semester, contact the ISSO and complete our [email \(isso@towson.edu\)](mailto:isso@towson.edu) or [form](#) which confirms that you will complete all degree requirements in your final semester.

courseload?

The Department of Homeland Security has a [Reduced Course Load Request](http://www.new.towson.edu/isso/docs/ReducedCourseLoadRequest.pdf) form. There are very few situations in which the U.S. Department of Homeland Security permits less than full-time enrollment. In all cases, an ISSO advisor must approve next-term enrollment in advance, before you complete registration or before you submit a withdrawal request. Failure to comply with the regulations may jeopardize your ability to remain in the U.S. to study or work.