



Part-Time Enrollment Authorization Due to Medical Condition for F1 Students

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F-1 students are required by federal immigration regulations to be engaged in a “full-course of study,” which means **12 semester hours** each fall/spring semester for **undergraduates**, and **8 semester hours** each fall/spring semester for **graduate students**. You must obtain authorization from the International Programs Office to be enrolled less than full-time during any fall or spring semester. The International Programs Office must indicate the authorization in the SEVIS system in order to make it official.

Rules:

- Enrollment below full-time for medical reasons cannot exceed a total of 12 months.
- If the condition prevents full-time enrollment beyond one semester, new documentation must be provided from your physician and authorization must be granted from the Director of International Student Affairs for the subsequent semester.
- If a student later moves to a higher degree level (such as from MA to PhD), the student receives an additional 12 month limit permitting part-time enrollment due to medical reasons.
- If after 12 months the student is still unable to resume full-time studies, the student must either leave the U.S. and reapply when he/she is able to handle full-time studies again, or apply to change to another nonimmigrant status appropriate for continuing medical treatment in the U.S.

Procedure:

1. Obtain a letter from your physician (Medical Doctor, Doctor of Osteopathy, or Licensed Clinical Psychologist only).
 - a. The letter must be typed, dated, and signed by the physician on the physician’s letterhead, *and*
 - b. The physician must indicate that you have a medical condition which prevents you from registering full-time during a specific semester, *and*
 - c. The physician must specify the number of semester hours for which you can register, *and*
 - d. The physician must specify the date by which you will be expected to return to full-time studies.
2. Send this letter to the Director of International Student Affairs (Greg Wymer) as soon as possible, preferably before the semester begins, or as soon as possible after the onset of your medical condition if it occurs after the semester starts. If you need to drop classes after the semester begins, you will not legally be able to do so until the Director receives this letter.

Sample Letter: Your physician might use the following as a template for writing the letter. The sample includes all information required to receive an authorization.

Student's First/Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Today's Date: _____

Ms. XX is a patient currently under my care, who has a medical condition which prevents her from pursuing full-time studies for the Fall or Spring 20__ semester. As his/her physician, it is my recommendation he/she be allowed to register for only ? semester hours during the semester. It is expected that he/she will be able to resume full-time studies during the Spring or Fall 20__ semester.

Physician Name: _____

Signature: _____

A Note to Pregnant Students or Students Who Have Recently Had a Baby:

Most people understand how difficult and challenging it is to be pregnant and recover from childbirth. Aside from such things that threaten the health or life of baby or mother, or complications experienced during delivery; however, the USCIS may take a different point of view. While the International Programs Office will not second-guess any recommendations provided by a qualified physician, we urge students to use caution when requesting authorization for a medical condition that relates to pregnancy or childbirth. Such things as breastfeeding and getting no sleep, or even a "normal" pregnancy, may present challenges, but it is not clear that the USCIS will view these as "medical conditions" should they ever have reason to review the situation of a student who has received such authorization. It may be helpful as a guide to be informed that U.S. law, through the Family Medical Leave Act, protects American workers' jobs only up to 12 weeks maximum. To be safe, you may want to use 12 weeks as your guide, unless there are further complications or medical conditions that prevent you from enrolling full-time.