

Online Course Policy for F-1 International Students



International students at CSU, Chico must abide by the regulations governing their visa type. One clause in the regulations limits the number of online course that students may take to meet their requirement of being full-time students.

Code of Federal Regulations, Section 8CFR214.2(f)(6)(i)(G)

“For F–1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class.”

Online Course Limit

As written above, there is no actual limit on the number of online course a student takes. Rather, there is a limit on the number of courses that count towards a student’s full courseload requirement. Only one online course may count towards a student’s full-time enrollment. Also, in a student’s final semester of enrollment, the student is not allowed to take only online courses without on-campus courses.

Full Time Enrollment Requirement

According to immigration regulations, students must attend courses full-time each fall and spring semester until they graduate. For undergraduate students, the minimum number of units required to be full-time is 12 units per semester. For graduate students the minimum number of units required to be full-time is 8 units per semester.

The immigration regulations list specific reasons that a student may take less than a full courseload. Unless one of the exceptions below applies, students are required to attend full-time throughout the entire semester and may not drop classes mid-semester if it causes them to fall below a full courseload. No exceptions to the full courseload requirement are allowed other than the following:

- 1) Documented Illness or Medical Condition
- 2) Difficulty with English Language/Reading Requirements/U.S. Teaching Methods in the First Semester of Study in the U.S.
- 3) Improper Course Level Placement
- 4) Research/Teaching Assistantship
- 5) Full-time CPT or OPT authorization
- 6) Concurrent Enrollment at Two Colleges/Universities Totaling Full-Time Enrollment
- 7) Graduate Student who has Completed All Coursework, Except Final Project, Thesis, or Comprehensive Exam and is Preparing for/Working on the Culminating Activity.
- 8) Last Semester of Degree

Students must receive approval from the International Student Advisors prior to taking less than a full courseload. More information on the Full Time Enrollment policy and application form to take a reduced courseload are available in the International Student Advising Office.