



## Summer 2020 Semester Verification & Reduced Courseload Request

International Students & Scholars Office ♦ 888 Commonwealth Avenue, Second Floor ♦ Boston, Massachusetts ♦ 02215  
 Telephone: 617/353-3565 ♦ isso@bu.edu ♦ www.bu.edu/isso ♦ Facsimile: 617/358-1170

*This form should be completed by any student who is completing their program at BU during Summer 2020.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ BU ID \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Where are you living currently?  Boston  Other city in the US  In my home country/outside of the US

*\*You should include a copy of your most recent [I-94 information](#) with this completed form.*

<p><b>Summer 2020 Registration (number of credits):</b></p> <p><i>*Only one of your courses can be a traditional online course. The others must be <i>face-to-face</i> courses (being offered remotely during Summer 2020) to maintain your status.                  *If you only need one class to graduate, it cannot be a traditional online course.</i></p>	<p>Summer I: _____</p> <p>Summer II: _____</p> <p><b>Total Credits:</b> _____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Check this box if you need less than 12.0 credits to graduate.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Check this box if you need ISSO to sign a drop form</p>
<p><b>Are you working on campus?</b></p> <p><i>*Students registered for only Summer I must stop employment by 6/21/2020. Students graduating in the Summer are limited to 20 hours per week of on-campus employment during the summer term.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Monthly Stipend (RA, TF) – until August 30, 2020</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Weekly Paid – until August 30, 2020</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A – no job</p>	
<p><b>When is your anticipated program completion date?</b></p> <p><i>Most students choose the September grad date as their program completion date. You should select 9/25 or the end of the summer term when you finish program requirements. This determines when you can apply for OPT.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Official Graduation: September 25, 2020</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> End of Summer I: July 1, 2020</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> End of Summer II: August 14, 2020</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (date): _____</p> <p><i>*Graduate students must speak with their ISSO advisor to discuss using dissertation submission deadline or equivalent, or SDM students to use “sign out” deadlines.*</i></p>	
<p>Are you planning to apply for Post-Completion OPT? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If you have an OPT appointment scheduled, what date is it? _____</p>	<p>What are your international travel plans within the next 6 months?</p>	

### Important Information:

- **By signing this form and submitting it to ISSO, I acknowledge:**
  - I have read P. 2 and P. 3 of this request form carefully and will contact ISSO with any questions that I have about my immigration status during my last semester at BU.
  - If I need less than 12 credits to graduate, ISSO will shorten my I-20 to my anticipated program completion date (based on what I select above) and will issue and e-mail to me an updated I-20 authorizing a Reduced Courseload for my final term.
  - If, for any reason, I will not graduate at the end of this semester, I will contact my ISSO Advisor immediately to determine how this might affect my immigration status.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

There are important considerations for students completing their final program requirements during the Summer Term. Please review the guidance below regarding your expected completion in Summer 2020.

### **Registration:**

Students completing their program requirements in summer term will require full-time registration or Reduced Course Load (RCL) authorization from the ISSO. Full-time registration is 8 credits in Summer I or 12 credits over both Summer I and Summer II. If your academic activity is considered to be full-time, your department may certify you as a full-time student with a part-time course load.

### **Online Courses:**

During your final term, you may not register for only online course work. For Summer 2020, an “online course” is one that would always be offered online. Only one of your courses can be an “online course” – the others must be traditional on-campus courses offered remotely during Summer 2020. If you are approved for a Reduced Course Load (RCL), you must take at least one traditional on-campus course (offered remotely during Summer 2020) as part of your summer course load. If you are taking 12 credits or more in total, you must take a minimum of 8 credits as traditional on-campus courses (offered remotely during Summer 2020).

### **Graduation Date:**

Most students who complete their required coursework in the summer sessions will officially graduate on September 25<sup>th</sup>. You must apply for graduation with your academic department.

### **Optional Practical Training and Program Completion:**

Most students completing in the summer will apply for OPT based on their September 25<sup>th</sup> graduation date. However, you may choose to shorten the program completion date on your I-20 to reflect the end of the summer term in which you will complete your coursework. The OPT application window is determined by your program completion date. Applications for OPT must arrive no more than 90 days before your program completion date and your requested OPT start date must be within the first 60 days after your program completion date. Please note that, per USCIS policy, you must be inside the United States to be able to apply for OPT. ISSO cannot recommend OPT for a student who is outside of the United States.

### **On-Campus Employment:**

Boston University permits on-campus employment for registered students. If you will complete your course work in Summer I, you may not work on-campus after the completion of Summer I. If you are enrolled in course in Summer II, you may not work past August 30, 2020. Questions about on-campus employment dates and payroll related issues should be directed to the Student Employment Office.

### **International Travel:**

COVID-19 related travel restrictions will make travel during Summer 2020 especially challenging. Traveling after the completion of your program requirements may bring additional risk. Unless you have applied for OPT, departure during your grace period (first 60 days after program completion date on I-20) will eliminate your ability reenter the US in F-1 status. For students applying for OPT, review the documentation required for reentry in the OPT acknowledgement form. Please check [the ISSO website](#) for the most updated travel information.

### **Grace Period:**

F-1 students have a 60 day grace period after their program completion date on their form I-20. During this grace period you may apply for OPT, transfer their SEVIS record to another school, process a level change to begin study in another BU program, or prepare to depart the U.S. Once you have departed the US during the grace period, you do not qualify for reentry in F-1 status unless you have a new I-20 for a new program of study.



## Reduced Course Load for Final Semester Information

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***This page contains important information for students who will be enrolled for less than 12 credits during Summer 2020 and are graduating at the end of the Summer term.***

As a student in F-1 or J-1 status you are required to maintain full-time registration each semester unless you are authorized by the ISSO for a Reduced Course Load (RCL). A full description of eligibility for reduced course load authorization can be found on the ISSO web site: <http://www.bu.edu/isso/immigration-status/maintaining-status/courseload/>

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### Frequently asked questions about Final Term Reduced Course Loads (RCL)

#### **What if I need to drop a course?**

Check the box on P. 1 that notes that you need to drop a course. Your ISSO advisor will send you a fillable Drop form that you will complete and return to them. Your ISSO Advisor will then sign your Drop form and submit it to the Office of the University Registrar on your behalf so you can be dropped from the course.

#### **Why was my I-20 end date changed?**

At the time you are admitted to your program of study, Boston University estimates the length of time that will be required for you to complete your program. When your final term RCL is authorized, the ISSO shortens your I-20 end date to reflect your new expected graduation date if your I-20 was initially issued for longer than necessary.

#### **Why am I being charged for full-time tuition if the ISSO approved my RCL?**

While ISSO authorizes your reduced course load for SEVIS and your immigration status, we do not change the coding on your registration record. Please work with your school/college or the University Registrar to change your coding to "part-time" so that your tuition charge can be adjusted.

#### **What happens if I don't graduate as I expected this term?**

The ISSO cautions students against requesting a final term RCL unless you are confident that you will be able to complete all remaining academic requirements in the current semester (including all courses, projects, as well as meeting the GPA requirement for graduation). If you request a final term RCL, the ISSO confirms in SEVIS that you are on track to complete your program of study by the end of that semester. This will result in your program completion date being shortened on your I-20/DS-2019.

***F-1 students:*** If, due to unusual academic circumstances, you will not be able to complete your program after being approved for a final term RCL, the ISSO can grant one further I-20 extension and RCL to complete your degree. Any request for an I-20 extension must be submitted to the ISSO in advance of your I-20 expiration in order to maintain status. A request for extension *after* a final term RCL, requires a complete extension request and a detailed letter from your academic department outlining the complications that prevented you from graduating as expected. If you are granted a 2<sup>nd</sup> final term RCL, further I-20 extensions cannot be granted. In this case, you should contact the ISSO for guidance about your legal options.

#### **Can I take online courses to complete my program?**

You must be enrolled in at least one on-campus course to maintain your status. If you only need one course to graduate, it cannot be an online course. If you need more than one course to graduate, taking only online courses during your final semester will result in a loss of your valid F-1 status and a termination of your SEVIS record. During Summer 2020, you can only enroll in one course that is offered in the traditional online format. In order to maintain status, you should enroll in courses that are listed as on-campus courses but will be offered remotely during Summer 2020.