



## DSS Reduced Course Load Policy

Disability Services for students occasionally recommends a reduced course load as an academic accommodation for a student with a disability as sometimes the requirement of full-time enrollment can be a barrier towards achieving their educational goals. This policy is for students registered with Disability Services for Students (DSS) and who based on their documentation are determined to greatly benefit by enrolling on a part-time (1-11 credits) instead of a full-time (12 or more credits) basis.

The adoption of this Reduced Course Load Policy was approved by the College Officers in the Spring of 2009 and thought to be an effective way of increasing retention among those students who have documented disabilities in which part-time enrollment is deemed best for the student to pursue and achieve their educational goals at Baldwin Wallace University.

Students approved for a reduced course load accommodation are entitled to all services enjoyed by full-time students and are considered full-time students for financial assistance and residency in University Housing. Students must register for a minimum of eight (8) credit hours and a maximum of eleven (11) credit hours. This accommodation must be requested each semester and does not automatically renew.

We strongly recommend that students make their request at least two weeks before the start of the semester. Requests after the first Friday of the semester are too late to be considered. Each academic year, the student must provide updated documentation as a change in disability may impact the student's eligibility for this accommodation.

### Application Process

Students seeking the reduced courseload accommodation must have completed the Disability Services for Students registration process outlined below.

1. Complete and submit the online Application for Accommodations.
2. Submit appropriate and current documentation. ***DSS must receive documentation of the condition which supports the reduced course load accommodation request.*** Documentation Guidelines and Verification Forms are available on our website: [www.bw.edu/DisabilityServices](http://www.bw.edu/DisabilityServices).
3. Schedule and attend the Student Welcome Meeting. Upon receipt and review of the application and documentation, DSS will schedule a meeting to discuss the impact, nature and functional limitations of your disability; determine reasonable accommodations (if any); discuss policies, processes, and procedures.

### **Reduced Courseload Approval**

If a reduced course load is determined to be an appropriate accommodation by DSS, we will contact the student in writing (via BW email address). Instructions are in the email, and it is the students' responsibility to follow-up with any additional information needed by the specified timeframe.

DSS will then contact the Director of Financial Aid, providing a formal reduced course load recommendation, the student's name, number of credits planned, and BWID number.

### **Reduced Courseload Denial**

If Disability Services for Students determines that a requested accommodation is unnecessary or is unreasonable, it will contact the student in writing (BW email address) within seven (7) business days of its determination. The students can choose to provide new and supporting documentation for reconsideration.

The University has established a four-step internal grievance procedure that is designed to achieve an equitable resolution within a reasonable amount of time. A University student who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, or denied access to accommodations required by law, shall have the right to invoke the grievance procedure. The grievance procedure is intended to address disputes regarding requested services or accommodations or modifications to University practices or requirements.

The grievance procedure shall not supersede or replace any existing University dispute resolution policies and procedures. Students are encouraged to consult with the Director of Disability Services or respective designees regarding the most appropriate University policy or procedure to address a particular concern. All forms are available in the DSS portal page.

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Students seeking a reduced course load accommodation must notify DSS each semester that they intend to utilize the accommodation and provide the number of credits planned for the semester. **This notification needs to occur at a minimum of two weeks before the beginning of the term, and the latest is the first Friday of the semester.**
2. Students seeking a reduced course load accommodation must meet with their academic advisor each semester to review their academic progress and discuss University degree completion requirements.
3. Students seeking a reduced course load accommodation should understand the financial implications of course withdrawal and consult the Office of Financial Aid beforehand.
4. The award amounts are not discussed with the representatives of DSS, as the award amounts have no bearing on the recommendation for a student to enroll part-time or to remain a full-time student.

5. The student is required to meet any federal and state or institutional financial aid requirements for receipt of assistance regardless of acceptance for and participation in the reduced course load accommodation program.
6. If a student withdraws during the term, the same institutional, as well as federal and state refund policy calculations, would be applied, as they presently do for normal full-time and other part-time students.
7. Students must understand that the reduced course load accommodation does not imply a lower cost for attending BW, as the student may still have higher costs due to the loss of other financial aid assistance not controlled by Baldwin Wallace University policies.
8. Students are not limited by the number of terms (eight) for which they can receive BW scholarship assistance but are limited by the maximum four-year scholarship value of their award. For example, a Scholars Award of \$10,000 annually would have \$40,000 total scholarship benefit. For a participating Disability Services student, the student can receive scholarship support up until the \$40,000 of maximum scholarship benefit has been reached, but no more in a given academic year than one year's worth of scholarship value.
9. Students are unable to use the reduced course load accommodation for summer term enrollment, except for possible scholarship eligibility stemming from the student's total annual amount of scholarship eligibility.
10. The reduced course load accommodation is unavailable to students with transient student status, as only BW course work is considered.

### **Financial Aid Process**

Upon receipt of the accommodation approval from DSS, the Director of Financial Aid will adjust the students current BW gift aid depending on the number of enrolled credits. This action may result in a pro-rated already awarded BW scholarship, an adjustment in BW Grant assistance, or the awarding of the "Baldwin Wallace Disability Services Grant 51103".

After the Office of Financial Aid receives the recommendation, a determination of eligibility will be made, and the student will receive a revised aid award. This revised award uses a calculation process that includes determining the proportion of gift aid that would be received as a full-time student in ratio to the student's normal, full-time, tuition and room and board charges (if applicable). Using the percentage ratio of gift assistance to full-time enrollment charges, the same percentage would then be applied to the lower, total amount of part-time tuition and if applicable, BW room and board charges for the term.