

All students are encouraged to take their own notes. This is an excellent way of being engaged and learning the course material. However, in some instances, students may experience a barrier in taking their own notes. When this is the case, the DSS office works with the student to explore possible options for classroom notes. These options can include:

- Using a laptop to take notes
- Using a digital recorder or smart pen for note-taking
- Using a Braille note-taking device

In some other instances, course instructors may provide access to notes by using these universal design strategies such as:

- Posting course notes or PowerPoint presentation on Blackboard for all students
- Assigning student teams and rotating the responsibility for each team to complete a set of notes. This approach engages all students to participate and take responsibility for sharing notes.

When these options are not feasible, then the accommodation approach will be used. In this instance, a peer volunteer note-taker will need to be identified. A sample announcement is provided below when the student requests a peer note-taker.

### **Sample Announcement**

Disability Support Services (DSS) is asking for a peer note-taker from this class to volunteer to share their notes with a classmate with a disability. This opportunity allows you to improve your own notes, help out another classmate, and build your resume experience.

We're looking for people who write legibly, get the main points, and want to help. Don't feel that you have to be the best note-taker to volunteer. All you have to do is use your own notepaper to take notes, scan, and send an email with the notes attached. If you prefer to type your notes or do it some other way DSS can work this out with you. To show our appreciation for your willingness to volunteer, DSS can also provide a Certificate of Volunteer Service at the end of the semester.

Please consider volunteering and let me know after class.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

1. Request note-taking as an accommodation each semester.
2. Provide the Accommodation Letter to each professor and discuss plans to use the note-taking accommodation. Discuss options for obtaining class notes:
  - Receive notes via email from the note-taker directly
  - Receive notes via email from the instructor directly
3. Independently locate a classmate who is willing to serve as a volunteer note-taker  
OR provide a class announcement to the instructor and request that they read it at the beginning of at least two class meetings.
4. Evaluate quality and consistency of notes and report any difficulties to your DSS counselor.

### **Instructor Responsibilities:**

1. Review the accommodation letter indicating that note-taking is a reasonable accommodation for students.
2. Discuss with the student whether they prefer you to make an announcement and to collect the notes for them or if they will ask another student in the class to take notes and receive the notes directly.
3. Read the Note-taker Announcement during at least two consecutive class meetings to assist in recruiting a volunteer peer note-taker....  
**OR** ask a specific student who has demonstrated academic skills to take notes for the student  
**OR** provide a hard copy of the instructor notes (if these notes are extensive enough to suffice).
4. Protect the confidentiality of the student (that is, do not point the student out as the student needing a note-taker accommodation in front of the class).
5. Facilitate a connection between the note-taker and the student with a disability. Once a note-taker is identified, check to see if the student would like to receive the notes directly from the note-taker or continue to receive the notes through the instructor
6. Notify the DSS counselor of any difficulties in locating a peer note-taker or with any other concerns.

### **DSS Responsibilities:**

1. Determine eligibility for note-taking services.
2. Provide student with Note-taking Directions to give to the instructor.
3. Address problems with note-taking reported by students or instructor.
4. Provide a Certificate of Volunteer Service for note-takers by the end of each semester, upon request.

### **Peer Note-taker Responsibilities:**

1. Use the note-taking tips below:
  - Organized notes are important. On each page, write the date, course number, and page number of the notes (for example, page 1 of 4; page 2 of 4; page 3 of 4; page 4 of 4).
  - Write legibly, preferable with a ballpoint pen.

- Write down all assignments and due dates, as well as anything written on the screen, board, etc...
  - Record the main ideas, key terms and vocabulary, and examples used by the instructor
  - Emphasize key points by underlining important words and phrases, or use asterisks, stars, etc...
  - You may also type your notes following the above guidelines.
  - Do your best!
2. Send the notes after each class period to the instructor or student.
  3. If you are absent from class, notify the instructor to determine alternative arrangements.
  4. If you drop the class at any time during the semester, inform the instructor as soon as possible so that a new note-taker can be found quickly.
  5. Respect the student's privacy and do not disclose the identity of the student to other students.
  6. Contact DSS at [dss@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:dss@montgomerycollege.edu) once the semester ends to receive a Certificate of Volunteer Service.