

Accessibility Services Office

Note-Taking Accommodation, Policies, & Procedures

Students with disabilities are ultimately responsible for the material covered in their courses, yet they may need support in order to have equal access to the notes supplied in class by the professor. The Accessibility Services Office and professors will assist in the coordinating of note-takers for students with injuries, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, hearing disabilities, fine motor deficits, and/or disabilities related to sight.

Students will not receive copies of course notes if they are absent from class unless the registered student receives approval from the Accessibility Services Office and the professor. Reasons may include medical-related reasons, or other extenuating circumstances.

The information and guidelines below will help students and faculty understand the procedures for identifying a peer note-taker and implementing note-taking support accommodations at Ohio Wesleyan University.

An approved Note-Taking accommodation may include:

- Copies of course notes (upon faculty approval)
- A laptop or tablet in class to type notes
- Audio recording lectures.
- Access to a peer note-taker.

What Options are there to Identify Peer Note-Takers?

Note-taking support is typically provided by volunteers enrolled in the same course. Students have two (2) primary options for identifying peer note-takers:

- 1) A student may request ASO communicate with the professors to help identify a student in the classroom.
- 2) A student may recruit their own volunteer note-takers. In this case, the student is responsible for self-disclosing to the note-takers, making arrangements for exchanging notes, and scheduling an appointment with the professor and the note-taker(s) to discuss note-taking procedures and policies. This option works best if students know of reliable note-takers who

type course notes and can send them as an email attachment after each class meeting. The student is encouraged to include the Accessibility Services Office in decisions regarding the selection of volunteer note-taker(s).

- 3) A student may request the assistance from their professors to recruit volunteer note-takers. Most of the time, the student should choose this option as professors are in the position to identify the most qualified note-takers. The students should arrange an appointment with their professors and the Accessibility Services Office to discuss the following points:
 - Identifying the most-qualified note-takers
 - Copying and picking up class notes
 - Creating a plan for what happens if the designated note-taker is absent

Regarding Confidentiality

Professors will make every effort to maintain student confidentiality (i.e., not revealing the names of these students to the class or to note-takers), but they cannot guarantee anonymity for students using note-taking services.

What Do Students Need to Do to Arrange for Note-Taking Accommodations?

1. Meet with the Accessibility Services Office to discuss note-taking accommodations.
2. Meet with each professor to discuss the process for receiving class notes and how often.
3. Pick up copies of course notes at an agreed upon time and place. If the note-taker types class notes on a laptop, he or she may send notes directly to the student. Otherwise, the student may be required to pick up notes one or more times a week from the department's administrative assistant or the ASO office
4. Let the professor know if notes are of poor quality or not provided in a timely way.
5. Inform professors if note-taking assistance is no longer needed.

What Do Professor Need to Do to Support Students with Note-Taking Accommodations?

1. **Identify student note-takers in one of two ways**
 - Speak with individual prospective primary and secondary note-takers after class or contact them through university email

- Ask the class in person or by email for volunteer note-takers. Then, briefly identify note-taking responsibilities. During this process, the professor should not reveal the identity of students requesting note-taking assistance unless given permission by the students who have requested the accommodation.
2. Meet with the student to discuss note-taking accommodations
 3. Meet with prospective student note-takers to discuss the benefits of being a note-taker and note-taking responsibilities.
 4. Select a primary note-taker and a secondary note-taker, who will provide notes if the primary note-taker is absent or can no longer continue his or her responsibilities. Professors should review examples of notes of prospective note-takers to determine their quality. Students may also request to see copies of sample notes to determine which note-taking format is best for them.
 5. Meet with the note-takers to review note-taker responsibilities and considerations:
 - a. Decide how often the notes will be provided to the student—ideally, after each class, but not less than once a week.
 - b. Determine how notes will be duplicated. Will the note-taker email notes directly to the student, or will the professor makes arrangements with the department’s Administrative Assistant to have notes duplicated.
 - c. Introduces note-taker(s) to the department’s Administrative Assistant in person or by university email.
 - d. Identify days when the note-taker may be absent from class
 6. Provide the names of the student note-taker(s) and phone number(s) to the Accessibility Services Office.

What are the Benefits of having a Note-Taker? What are the Responsibilities?

Benefits:

- Class attendance and quality of course notes tend to improve for note-takers.
- Note-takers have a greater understanding of course material, typically resulting in better grades.
- Volunteer experience for the note-taker’s resume.

Responsibilities:

- Attend every class.
- Take careful and legible notes.
- Copy and provide notes for each class meeting.
- Inform instructors about anticipated absences.
- Protect the identities of students for whom they are taking notes (if the students' identities have been disclosed to them).
- Inform the professor immediately if they cannot continue as note-takers.

Students and faculty should contact the Accessibility Services Office (740-368-3990, aso@owu.edu, Corns Hall 316) if they have questions about the note-taking accommodation policy or procedures.