

INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

We believe that students in need of note taking assistance are best serviced by other students in their classes. Therefore, we are requesting your cooperation and assistance in arranging a note taker for this student. The following suggestions may help you identify potential note takers.

- Some Instructors ask students to turn in their notes, usually at the end of the second or third class session, for review. This enables the Instructor to identify students who are taking good notes and to identify other students who may be having difficulty taking notes. The letter may be considered as a potential referral to the Ability Service Office.
- The Instructor could then approach one or two potential note takers and ask if they would be willing to provide a copy of their notes for another class member. In most cases, it is best to have a back-up to the regular note taker.
- If the student is willing to provide notes, give the student a copy of the attached.

Some students are sensitive about using a notetaker; therefore it is important to ask the student if he/she prefers to pick-up the notes from you. In which case, the notetaker would turn in the notes to you, the Instructor, and you would pass the notes on to the student at a mutually convenient time and place.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUCCESS OF THE STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY

You may find that the student who has asked to use your notes asks for notes from one or more students as well. This means that he/she is planning to put additional time and energy into studying by synthesizing several sets of notes to make sure he/she is getting all the information in the most organized fashion. If you and the others whose notes are being used have followed the guidelines included here, the combining of your notes will impose a structure on the information presented that the student with a disability might not be able to develop independently. With your cooperation in sharing your notes, the student has a chance to concentrate on the content of the information presented in class instead of on the mechanics for getting it down on paper. This shifts the emphasis back to what is to be learned instead of how to learn it, and may make all the difference for that student when it comes to grading, testing and showing what he/she knows.

Please remember that your help is sincerely appreciated. If you have any questions contact the Ability Services Office at 713/718-6164.



ABILITY SERVICES

“How to take notes for a student with a Disability”



Central College Ability Services

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Coleman College Ability Services

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Northeast College Ability Services

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Northwest College Ability Services

Katy Campus

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Spring Branch Campus

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Southeast College Ability Services

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Southwest College Ability Services

West Loop Campus

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Stafford Campus

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WHY DOES HE/SHE NEED MY NOTES?

You have been asked to provide a copy of your class notes to a student with a disability who is in your class. The nature of the disability makes it difficult for him/her to take comprehensive written notes in class.

“OK, I’ll be your note taker.....What does that mean?”

Sometimes a student with a disability will have difficulty in transferring words or thoughts to paper; sometimes the student has difficulty “decoding” what is heard (e.g., he/she may hear “Tuesday” and think it was “two days”); some students may have difficulty dealing with new vocabulary. For whatever reason, the student with a disability may be able to listen better and profit more from their own notes if they can supplement them with information from the notes of classmates who do not share these difficulties. Your notes will be a valuable study aid for the student with a disability. You may also find that by taking careful notes and using the following guidelines, your notes will be better, clearer and more useful to you, personally.

SOME TIPS TO MAKE YOUR NOTES MORE USEFUL FOR SOMEONE ELSE (AND YOU)!

1. Label each set of notes with the lecture title and date, and number the pages.
2. Listen intently from the beginning of the lecture; the Instructor may outline the lecture in the first few minutes and often will make sure that important details that have not been explained are covered in the last 5-10 minutes.
3. Write as many meaningful facts and details as you can:
 - Write down everything the instructor writes on the board; he/she must think its important;
 - Record all technical facts, names, dates, equations, diagrams and examples;
 - Note clues the Instructor gives indicating that something is important, such as the repetition of a definition or point of information, change of voice, body language, verbal cues, etc.
4. Circle the star (*) assignments and announcements, such as test dates.
5. Reading the text and reviewing your notes before class will improve your understanding of the lecture.
6. Make the notes easier to read and more effective as a study aid by;
 - Using one side of the paper only, using dark, ball point pen, write legibly.
 - Leaving blanks when you are unsure (get clarification from the instructor after class).
 - Using correct spelling (if unsure of a work, write “sp?” above it and correct it later).
 - Using white space effectively (separate main ideas/topics with a line or two).
 - Marking points of emphasis (change the print, circle, underline, use stats, etc.).
 - Using abbreviations carefully (make a list at the beginning or end of the note as to any unusual abbreviations you used and what they represent).