

Note Taking Handbook

Mount Aloysius College – Disability Services

Why does Mount Aloysius College have student note takers?

Students at Mount Aloysius College with documented disabilities can receive a variety of academic accommodations, which are determined on a case-by-case basis. A common accommodation gives the student access to notes taken in class by a fellow student.

Note taking as an accommodation may be appropriate for a students who have a hearing or visual impairment, a motor or physical limitation, or an attentional or learning disability. When the disability is attention or learning-based, students often have difficulty listening to the lecture and simultaneously processing the auditory information, while also writing it down. Through their note taker’s notes, these students have the opportunity to fully engage with in-class content, knowing that they will be receiving quality lecture notes to supplement their own lecture notes.

Students can be recommended to be a note taker by faculty based on academic performance, or students can complete a Note Taker Interest Form on their own accord. Disability Services will then select a student in the class to attend every class session, take good notes and present them to the Disability Office for copying.

Who are student note takers?

Many of our note takers are students who have been recommended by their instructors. Note takers often demonstrate excellent organizational skills, punctuality, dependability, ability to process and synthesize information into notes, and/or strong academic performance.

This is a service to assist students with disabilities, not a part-time job on campus.

To qualify as a note-taker, a student must:

- Must be in good academic standing
- Attend class on a regular basis
- Take clear, organized, comprehensive, and legible notes

**Note-taking assignments are based upon need, so note-takers will be selected on a first-come, first-serve basis. Note-takers must be in the same class as the student with a disability requesting a note-taker.

Note-taking stipend:

We greatly appreciate the efforts of our note takers. Upon the completion of the semester or term for which the note taker has provided notes, they will be eligible to receive

- a small stipend
- community service hours
- a certificate of thanks for volunteering for this form of community service at the College

Note takers receive a stipend of \$100.00 per semester, per class in which notes are being taken. Stipends will be paid once the semester is complete if the notes have been provided consistently and satisfactorily.

To receive community service hours, the note taker must log their hours online after each note taking session.

Due to changes in students' schedules and their accommodation needs, note taking assignments may be added or canceled mid-semester. In such cases, Disability Services uses the following guidelines for partial stipends:

- If a note taking assignment is canceled by Disability Services prior to the "Add" deadline, or within 2 weeks of the note taker's starting date, the note taker will not receive a stipend.
- If a note taking assignment is canceled by Disability Services prior to the "Drop" deadline or within 4 weeks of the note taker's starting date, the note taker will receive a stipend of \$25.
- If a note taking assignment is canceled by Disability Services prior to the 8-week mark, or if a note taker begins their assignment after the 8-week mark, the note taker will receive a stipend of \$50.
- If a note taking assignment is canceled by Disability Services after 8-week mark, the note taker will receive a stipend of \$100 (full stipend).

Note Taker Responsibilities:

- 1) Note takers are responsible to either hand-write or type their notes as a record of what was discussed in class that day. They convey all classroom material – presented orally or printed – in a legibly written or typed format as objectively and organized as possible. This means that they will take detailed notes on:
 - What the professor says during lecture
 - What classmates or guest lecturers present
 - Class discussions
 - In-class films
 - PowerPoint presentation
 - What the professor writes on the board
 - Course assignments when the professor gives oral updates or instructions
- 2) Notes should be submitted after every class meeting as a rule of thumb.
- 3) Note takers are asked to minimize ink bleed-through by taking notes on only *ONE* side of the paper, or by using a pen that does not bleed through the page.
- 4) Note takers must submit notes at least once a week at minimum. This should be prior to 4pm each Friday. This can be done by emailing them to mevans@mtaloy.edu or by going to the Disability Services office at 100 St. Joseph's Hall. The notes will be given to the student with the accommodation through Disability Services.

- 5) Notify Disability Services if the note taker can no longer take notes for any length of time
- 6) Note takers must log their community services hours online after each note taking session to receive credit

Faculty Responsibilities:

- 1) Receive accommodation letter from disability student that a note taker is needed
- 2) Make a class announcement during two consecutive class periods to assist in recruiting a volunteer note taker
- 3) Ask a specific student according to the aforementioned criteria if they are interested in being recommended to be a note taker
- 4) Submit a Note Taker Recommendation Form (on Disability Services website page) to Disability Services
- 5) Notetaking is a confidential service. Please adhere to the policy of not disclosing to anyone the names of students receiving any access services, or any information about them.
- 6) Notify Disability Services with any concerns of attendance, academic performance or any other concerns that may arise with a note taker.
- 7) Provide feedback to the note taker about the quality and consistency of the notes
- 8) If the student with a disability makes the arrangement for a note taker without faculty assistance, that is acceptable, however, if no pre-arranged volunteer is suggested by the student, it is important that faculty provide assistance by making an announcement in class without revealing the student's name
- 9) If faculty are willing to share their notes and believe they are thorough, that would be an option to meet this accommodation

Disability Services Responsibilities:

- 1) Provide an accommodation letter that states "Note Taker" for the student with disabilities
- 2) Review submitted Note Taker Recommendation and Note Taker Interest Forms
- 3) Select a note taker based on established criteria
- 4) Make copies of note taker's notes for student with accommodation
- 5) Notify student with disability that a copy of notes are available in Disability Services
- 6) Review Note Taker Feedback Forms and award stipend and service hours as appropriate

Note Taking Guidelines:

- Clearly write the class name and date on the top of the notes. Include a title or lecture topic, if applicable.
- Number pages consecutively, at the top or bottom of the page

- Take detailed notes. However do not feel the need to write in complete sentences.
- Included technical facts, terms, definitions, dates, equations, diagrams, lists, and examples.
- If the professor references a text, include page numbers
- Include material presented on the board or a projector
- Include comments the class makes that the professor agrees with
- Mark points of emphasis. Possibly circle the important information or put a * by it.
- Circle or star assignments and announcements (such as a test date) within the notes, or write this information near the top of the first page.
- All students benefit from well-organized notes that follow a logical sequence and make good use of headings and subheadings.
- Once the notes are complete, either email them to Disability Services at mevans@mtaloy.edu or stop by 100 St. Joseph's Hall to have them copied

Assessment of Note Taker to Receive Stipend:

- Disability Services will check with the professor about the note takers attendance
- Disability Services will review the Note Taker Feedback Form that is completed by the student that receives the note taking accommodation

Confidentiality:

For privacy reasons, note takers are not informed of the identity of the student(s) whom request and receive notes. Should the note taker learn the identity of the student(s) receiving notes, the note taker should communicate with them in a discrete and respectful manner.

Should the note taker accidentally and unintentionally learn the identity of a student receiving notes, and this student has not explicitly chosen to disclose their identity, do NOT share any identifying information about this student (including name, gender, and/or other traits) with any other students, staff, or uninvolved instructors. If the note taker has questions about the information that can or can't be disclosed, please contact Disability Services.

Please keep in mind that students with disabilities have varying levels of comfort when it comes to disclosing disabilities to their peers, and they may or may not introduce themselves to the note taker by name. We ask that note takers please respect the students' continued privacy if they choose to remain anonymous.

If a Note Taker Misses a Class:

Note takers are expected to regularly attend class sessions for the course(s) in which notes are taken. If, however, a note taker is absent from class, it is their responsibility to secure a copy of the notes from a fellow student and, with the student's permission make a copy of their notes to give to Disability Services. It is the note taker's responsibility for ensuring notes are provided from the missed section of class.

If a Note Taker Can No Longer Continue With Notes:

It is the responsibility of the note taker to contact Disability Services immediately if they are unable to maintain copies of notes for any reason, such as illness or dropping a course. Note takers are asked to provide two weeks notice prior to their resignation, so that Disability Services may recruit and secure a new note taker without interrupting provision of notes to the students who receive them.

Three Options to Apply to be a Note Taker:

- 1) Students can talk with their professor if they are interested in becoming a note taker. Professors can formally submit a Note Taker Recommendation Form to Disability Services if they are in agreement that the student would be a good candidate.

- 2) A student interested in becoming a note taker can submit the Note Taker Interest Form (found on the Counseling and Disability Services link on the College website).

-Please note that submitting the Note Taker Interest Form is not a formal commitment, but only a statement of interest in potentially becoming a note taker in the future.

-Similarly, we are unable to guarantee that everybody that submits a form will be offered a note taking assignment.

- 3) A professor may choose to submit a Note Taker Recommendation Form on their own for a student they think would make a good note taker. If chosen, this student will be contacted by Disability Services and they have the right to accept or refuse the assignment.