



Notetaker Handbook

Disability Services
201 Carroll Hall
(919) 760-8427

DisabilityServices@meredith.edu

Adapted from Gail Freeman, Forsyth Tech Community College

Welcome to Meredith College!

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

Meredith College's goal is to create an accessible community where people are judged on their abilities not their disabilities. The Disability Services staff strives to provide individuals with the tools by which they can better accomplish their educational goals.

In post-secondary settings, it is the student's responsibility to request accommodations, if desired. It is important to remember that not every student with a disability needs an accommodation. It is equally important to remember that even though two individuals may have the same disability, they may not need the same accommodation.

Disability Services provides, arranges, and coordinates accommodations for students in courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. The Disability Services staff maintains disability-related documents, certifies eligibility for services, determines reasonable accommodations and develops plans for the provision of such accommodations for students with disabilities.

As a Volunteer Notetaker, you are part of a team of dedicated professionals committed to providing quality services to students with disabilities. The information in this handbook is designed to make your time as a Volunteer Notetaker a pleasant and productive experience.

Thank you for your commitment!

Disability Services Staff

Notetaking Assistance

Notetaking assistance is provided as an accommodation for students whose documented disability interferes with their ability to take notes. Notetaker assistance is intended for a student's personal study use only and is not to be shared with other individuals. This service is provided as a necessary academic accommodation and is not considered a substitute for a student's attendance and participation in class. Students requesting notetakers will seek assistance from their professor to identify a volunteer notetaker who is also in the course.

The notetaker stipend program is being piloted for the spring semester of 2007 to address the notetaking needs of students who use sign language interpreters. Since students who use interpreters are not able to observe the interpreter and take notes like other hearing students can, a notetaker is an additional accommodation that is typically utilized. This semester we are trying a new approach for students who use interpreters by offering to pay their notetakers. This is a pilot program for our office and we will only be paying student notetakers who are providing notes to accompany interpreting services, not volunteer notetakers in all classes. The primary reason for this extra measure is to ensure that the Deaf or Hard of Hearing student will have access to the information presented in class should the interpreter not show up (which could happen due to sudden illness, accidents, etc.,)

Notetaker Job Qualifications

- Possess college-level language, vocabulary, and English skills.
- Have the ability to take clear and organized notes.
- Have at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average.
- Agree to adhere to confidentiality standards set by the Testing/Disability Services/ADA office.
- Agree to be reliable, prompt, and responsible.

Notetaker's Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- You will attend each class and take notes to the best of your ability on the lecture or content discussed in class. If an emergency arises and you are unable to attend class, you will notify Disability Services immediately.
- You will make arrangements for another classmate to take notes if you will miss class.

- You will complete brief training on how to take effective notes and will provide a certificate of completion to Disability Services. The training is free and available online at <http://www.netac.rit.edu/onlinenotetakertraining.html>
- You will submit your notes at the end of each class day by any of the following methods:
 - report to Disability Services at the end of each class day to have your notes copied,
 - provide a copy of your notes directly to the student immediately after class if she has disclosed her identity, OR
 - email your notes to DisabilityServices@meredith.edu after each class if you would prefer to take notes on your computer.
- The notetaker will not be responsible for the cost of copying notes. Disability Services will provide carbon paper or the use of a copy card as needed.
- The notetaker will meet with Disability Services staff to address any issues or concerns.
- Should the notetaker know the identity of the student for whom she is taking notes, she will keep this information confidential.
- The notetaker will abide by the notetaker code of ethics.
- If you fail to attend or provide notes for more than three class sessions, the result may be termination of this agreement. Likewise, you are not the student's stand-in. If the student misses more than three classes, you must notify the Coordinator of Disability Services / ADA.

Payroll Policy and Procedures

Meredith College is piloting a program to pay a stipend of \$150 per semester, per course for notetakers whose services accompany a sign language interpreter. The stipend will be dispersed in two equal payments of \$75.00, to be disbursed at midterm and at the end of the semester. Disability Services will confirm the enrollment of the requesting student during the first month of classes. In the event that the student drops the class or cancels notetaking services within the first 45 calendar days from the first class session, 50% of the stipend amount will be paid. For all cancellations after the first 45 days, the full stipend amount will be paid. In the event that two students with disabilities are in the same class receiving notes, the Notetaker will be paid only for the first set of notes.

To receive payment for notetaking services rendered, the Notetaker must submit a completed invoice at midterm and at the end of the semester.

Disability Services Confidentiality Agreement

The student requesting this service has the option of identifying him or herself to you or maintaining their anonymity. The agreement to maintain confidentiality must be signed in the event that the student chooses to identify him or herself to you.

Thank you for your assistance!



NOTETAKING SERVICE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT

I, _____,
First Name Middle/Former Last Name

agree to provide a copy of my notes during _____ semester
Semester Year

for _____ .
Course Name Section

I understand I will be paid a \$150 stipend per class, per semester, to be disbursed in equal payments at midterm and at the end of the semester. I have read the Notetaker Handbook and understand my role and responsibilities. I agree to abide with the policies and procedures set forth by Disability Services.

In the event the student I'm assisting drops the class or cancels notetaking services within the first 45 calendar days from the first class session, 50% of the stipend amount will be paid. For all cancellations after the first 45 days, the full stipend amount will be paid. If two students with disabilities are in the same class requiring notes, I understand that I will only be paid for one set. I further understand that if I begin taking notes for a student after the first week of classes, my stipend will be prorated.

I agree to complete a mandatory online training session on effective notetaking by the second week of classes. I will provide the certificate of completion by the second week of classes. I agree to attend class, missing no more than three class meetings, to take neat and organized notes, and to provide a copy of my notes to either Disability Services or the student following each class session.

Should I encounter any problems fulfilling my responsibilities, I agree to contact Disability Services immediately. I also understand that this service is an accommodation, not a substitution for class attendance.

Signature

Date



DISABILITY SERVICES CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Disability Services is dedicated to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the students registered with this office. We acknowledge the need to be ever circumspect against breaches of confidentiality.

No staff member, student assistant, or volunteer shall reveal the identity of a student registered with this office, unless the student has authorized the disclosure of their information in writing. This includes the individual's identity, disability, or any other personal information. Any doubt regarding disclosure must be resolved in favor of confidentiality.

I, _____, the undersigned understand that any breach of confidentiality is a serious matter and may be cause for removal as a staff member, student assistant, or volunteer from the Counseling Center/Disability Services at Meredith College.

Signature

Date

Notetaker Code of Ethics

1. Notetakers should keep all assignment-related information strictly confidential

Like an interpreter or advisor, notetakers do not share information about the students they work with. This includes:

- Who in class they take notes for
- Why the student needs services

2. Notetakers should transcribe lectures as faithfully and completely as possible

- “Transcribe” does not mean a word-for-word record of everything the instructor says.
- However, notetakers must provide a useful and correct set of notes the student can use to study and complete assignments.

3. Notetakers should not use notes to advise, interject personal opinion, or counsel students

- Class notes should reflect the instructor’s meaning and intent, without added commentary or opinion.
- There are times notetakers may want to add their own ideas, especially when they are knowledgeable or have strong feelings about the subject. However, the notetaker’s role is to convey the instructor’s ideas and opinions.

4. Notetakers should not counsel or advise the instructor or students

The notetaker’s job is to create a tool, but they are not tutors, advisors, or counselors. They can work with the student as a peer or friend, but should not assume a formal role beyond taking notes.

- If there is difficulty that the instructor can address—such as talking too fast or not providing enough time to copy overheads—the notetaker can bring it to the instructor’s attention, but in the context of taking better notes for the student.
- If there is a difficult issue, bring it to the attention of someone with a more formal role, such as the Notetaker Coordinator.

5. Notetakers should choose assignments appropriate to their experience or skill in the subject area

Notetakers should, in general, be good students. In more advanced classes, especially at the college level, they should:

- Be A or B students in the subject
 - Have a major or concentration in the subject
- This helps ensure that they are familiar with basic concepts and vocabulary.

6. Notetakers should behave in a manner appropriate to the situation

Notetakers are still students, but they are also part of the educational team that supports students with hearing loss. As part of that team, they need to take their role seriously:

- Attending every class
- Arranging for a substitute when they cannot be there
- Completing all readings and assignments
- Maintaining their own grades
- Completing notetaking tasks responsibly