

# POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL FOR STAFF NOTETAKERS



Office of Student Disability Services at Lehman  
College

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# WELCOME

The Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) offers note-taking services to its eligible students as an accommodation in accordance with Section 504 of the National Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. As a participant in our Staff Note-taker Program, you have the unique opportunity to play a key role in your fellow college student's academic success. The materials included here are intended to facilitate a positive note-taker-student relationship, to explain note-taking policies and procedures, and to provide some suggestions for taking useful notes.

On behalf of our students and our office, thank you for your assistance and support. We look forward to working with you for semesters to come.

# GUIDELINES FOR STAFF NOTE-TAKERS

Ideally, you will have an opportunity to talk to your student prior to class and learn what s/he finds most helpful in terms of note-taking format, print size, pen color, etc. When this is not possible, however, introduce yourself to both the professor and your student on the first day of class, and speak to your student then about note-taking preferences. Find a seat next to your student so that they may see what is being written as the instructor is lecturing.

From time to time we may assign you to work with a student who prefers not to be identified to the class as receiving notes. Likewise, this student will not want to be recognized by you. Kindly refrain from greeting the student or sitting near him/her. In these instances, please bring your notes directly to the Office of Student Disability Services in Shuster Hall, room 238, and place them in the student's file. (Doreen Patrick, our office assistant, can help you find the right file.)

Please take some time to read the guidelines on the pages that follow to help you and your student work cooperatively and productively. Should you need any additional information, take a look at our frequently-asked-questions section in this manual, or feel free to contact the Office of Student Disability Services either by phone at (718) 960-8441 or by email [disability.services@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:disability.services@lehman.cuny.edu).

1. Note-takers must take notes in duplicate, on self-carbonized paper, one copy for the student and one copy for the SDS office. This paper is available for free in Shuster Hall, room 238. If you prefer not to use the paper, you will need to make a Xerox copy of the notes. (You are welcome to use the copy machine in the SDS office.)
2. If you are using self-carbonized paper, you must give the top copy of the notes to the student immediately after class. If, for some reason, this exchange doesn't happen, go to the SDS office as soon as possible and make sure that the top copy is placed in the student's file. (As mentioned above, please ask Doreen Patrick, our office assistant, where to find the appropriate file.) ALWAYS bring the bottom copy to the SDS office in a timely manner for the student's file.
3. When using self-carbonized paper, ALWAYS use a ballpoint pen to take notes. Otherwise, writing will not show up on both top and bottom copies. (Note that some students may require different types of paper and pen colors, depending on their disabilities.)
4. Unless otherwise specified by the student, the top of the first page of each set of notes should include the following: class title; the instructor's name; the note-taker's name; the student's name; the date; and page number. If there is just one page of notes, please number it as Page 1 of 1. If you have multiple pages, they should be numbered in the following manner: Page 1 of 3, Page 2 of 3, and so on. This way, students will know if a page is missing.
5. Write on one side of the page only. Do not cram words together. Indent paragraphs and skip lines between ideas. Use as much

paper as you need; make it easy for the eye to find information.

6. Devise a system for highlighting important information. For example, emphasize items by underlining them in another color, using ALL CAPS, or placing a star or two near important ideas. Be consistent, whatever system you use. Talk to your student about his/her preferences, and make sure s/he understands your system.
  
7. In your notes, indicate who is making a particular remark. Use "I" for instructor and "S" for student, for example. (Again, make sure your student understands your note-taking system.) This is especially helpful if there is frequent instructor-student dialogue. Be sure to indicate when the instructor has strongly agreed with a student's comment. In a small class, if you know the name of the student speaking, specify it. (This is not necessary for lectures.)
  
8. Since you are not a student in the class, DO NOT participate in the class discussion. Likewise, while notetaking, DO NOT offer your opinions, include additional information, or edit anything out.

(\*\* See sample notes at the end of this manual. \*\*)

# GETTING PAID: TIMESHEETS, WORKSHEETS, AND CHECKS

Staff Note-takers are required to submit timesheets on a bi-weekly basis. The SDS provides you with these documents, but it is your responsibility to fill them out ACCURATELY and submit them ON TIME to avoid delays in payment. Timesheets are submitted to Doreen Patrick, our office assistant, in Shuster Hall, room 238. Note-takers are paid approximately every two weeks.

Fill in your personal information on your timesheet and worksheet. On the timesheet, write the time you started note-taking and the time you finished. Complete your blank worksheet according to the sample worksheet provided in this manual. (A sample timesheet is also included.)

A timesheet schedule (a sample is also included here) indicates the date your timesheet is due. This deadline is listed in the "Human Resources Deadline" column. The "Check Date" column indicates when you will receive your paycheck. You can pick up your check in the Bursar's Office, Shuster Hall, room 031 on the day it is available. Be sure to bring a valid photo ID. If you prefer, you can arrange for direct deposit by obtaining a form from the Payroll Office in Shuster Hall, room 227.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STAFF NOTETAKER PROGRAM

**1. What is the rate of pay and how is it calculated?**

Note-takers are paid \$8.75 per each hour spent in class taking notes (rounded to the nearest quarter hour.)

**2. How do I get paid?**

Note-takers must complete and submit timesheets to Doreen Patrick, our office assistant, in the Office of Student Disability Services, Shuster Hall, room 238.

**3. What do I do if my student doesn't show up to class?**

If the student for whom you are taking notes has not arrived by the beginning of class, wait 20 minutes. If the student still doesn't come, notify the SDS at (718) 960-8441.

**4. What happens if my student is repeatedly absent from class?**

Note-taking should NEVER be considered a substitute for a student's class attendance. If your student is repeatedly absent, notify Doreen Patrick (718) 960-8441 at once.

**5. What do I do if the instructor doesn't show up to class?**

If the instructor does not arrive by the start of class, wait with the student for 20 minutes before leaving. After 20 minutes, you and student may leave, but you must report the canceled class to the SDS.

**6. What do I do if I can't make one of the class sessions? What**



**if I have an emergency?**

Note-takers must notify the Office of Student Disability Services of any schedule changes AT LEAST ONE WEEK in advance (except in emergency situations). Call the office or come to Shuster Hall, room 238. That way, we can find a substitute.

**7. What if my student drops his/her course?**

If a student drops a course or a course is canceled by the college after you have been scheduled to take notes, we will try our best to reassign you.

**8. What happens if the course schedule changes?**

Note-takers and students should immediately report any changes in course hours or room assignment to Doreen Patrick in the Office of Student Disability Services. Call the office or stop by Shuster Hall, room 238 to let her know.

**9. I'm taking notes for a student and have a strong command of the subject matter. What happens if my student asks me for additional help, such as tutoring?**

As a Staff Note-taker, you are only required to provide note-taking services. You are neither expected nor obliged to assist your student with anything additional.

# NETBOOKS & NOTETAKING: ORGANIZING FILES & PREVENTING DATA LOSS

From time to time staff note-takers may be asked to supply typed notes instead handwritten notes. This is especially useful to students who are blind or visually impaired, and to students with learning difficulties. (They can use software programs to have the notes read aloud.) Please follow the recommendations below to help you and your student keep track of files and prevent data loss.

## **Battery Life:**

- Netbooks do not have a long battery life. Be sure your netbook is fully charged before class.
- When possible, sit near an outlet and plug your netbook in during class to avoid data loss.

## **Organizing Notes:**

- Create a folder for each class, which includes the course name, number, and semester. (For example, Soc346\_spring2015.) Save all corresponding notes there.

## **Creating/Saving Files:**

- Open up a new Microsoft Word document.
- Immediately go to the Office Icon and select "Save As."
- The file name should include the course name, number, and lecture date. (For example, Soc346\_Feb12). Make sure you save it in the class folder. (In this case, Soc346\_spring2015.)

- Press **Ctrl + S** on the keyboard or click the save icon on the toolbar to save the document periodically.