Disability Services and Programs
Note-Taking Guidelines and Procedures

Note-taking is a legally approved accommodation for students who have been determined by Disability Services and Programs as qualifying for this service. USC students can provide an important service by agreeing to provide notes for DSP students in their classes. Note-takers will be compensated at the end of each semester.

Rights and Responsibilities for Students approved for note-takers

- Students registered with DSP who are determined eligible for note-takers as one of their approved accommodations will be permitted one note-taker per course.

- DSP students must sign a Note-Taking Agreement and receive a Note-Taking Guidelines and Procedures document when they pick up their letters of accommodation every semester.

- DSP students are encouraged to recruit their own note-takers in one of two ways: (1) by asking another student to take notes for them, or (2) by asking the professor/TA to make an announcement in class to solicit a note-taker for the student. DSP students should explain the role of note-taker to the student and direct them to DSP to fill out an application and receive further instructions. DSP will also do its part in searching for possible note-takers and periodic emails will be sent out to help with this search.

- DSP students should request ALL accommodations (including note-takers) before the beginning of the semester or within the first week of the new semester.

- At the end of the semester, the DSP student must certify that the note-taker has met all requirements, and is therefore eligible for compensation (see below for specific requirements). The DSP student must sign a Note-Taker Certification Form during the last three weeks of class, before final exams. Note-takers who have not been certified as meeting their responsibilities by the DSP student will not be eligible for compensation.

- Notes are provided only when the DSP student is in class. If the DSP student does not attend a class, notes should not be provided, unless mutual alternative arrangements have been made. Any problem or question regarding this should be referred to the DSP office. Only in rare circumstances where the absence is disability related will a DSP student be eligible for the notes of a class they miss.

- DSP students shall not recruit TA’s or Professors as note-takers. All note-takers must be students enrolled in the same class and section in which the DSP student is seeking the accommodation.

Note-Taker’s Responsibility

- Note-takers must complete a Note-Takers Application and Agreement and submit it to the DSP office.

- Note-takers must meet briefly with Althea Myrie, Office Manager, at the beginning of the semester and complete additional paperwork. Althea may be contacted by calling (213) 740-0776, or at myrie@usc.edu. To be eligible for a stipend this must be done at least three weeks before stop day.

- Note-takers must maintain confidentiality regarding the student’s disability at all times. This includes ensuring that they do not reveal the identity of the DSP student to peers or faculty, unless given permission by the DSP student. The note-taker should not discuss anything regarding the DSP student with anyone other than DSP staff. When emailing more than one DSP student make sure you Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) the addresses you are sending notes to.

To qualify for compensation, note-takers must meet the following requirements:

1. Notes must be distributed for the entire semester, and class absences should be minimized. Note-takers must provide notes for no less than 90% of all class lecture time when the DSP student is in class. Punctuality is required to take notes for the entire lecture. The only possible exception to this requirement would be for matches made late in the semester.

2. Notes should be submitted to DSP students in a timely fashion, no later than the conclusion of the class day, unless mutual alternative arrangements have been made. DSP, only upon request, will provide USC copy cards for the purpose of making photocopies of notes for DSP students. Cards will be issued in $10 and $20 denominations, based on the amount of notes taken. Card denomination will be determined by DSP staff.

3. If unable to attend class, note-takers should make arrangements to ensure that the DSP student is still able to receive notes.

4. Note-takers will be compensated in one of two ways at the end of the semester: 1) via a $60 stipend ($20 for each additional student in a course and $40 for each additional course), 2) via a letter of commendation from the Division of Student Affairs which would replace the first $60 of the stipend. Both methods of compensation will only be released upon completion of the Note-Taker Certification Form. Note-takers will need to decide on their desired method of compensation when the Note-Taker Application & Agreement is filled out. This decision will be final.

5. Compensation will be mailed to the permanent address that is on file with the university. To verify or change this address, please go to OASIS online.

- Note-takers registering with DSP in the middle of the semester are responsible for supplying notes to the DSP student/s from the beginning of the semester.

- TA’s are ineligible to serve as note-takers for students registered with our office in their courses.

- Note-taker information (Name, phone number, email address) may be given to the Student Athletics Office for the purpose of matching up DSP Athletes with note-takers. Note-takers and DSP Athletes will follow the usual protocol as outlined in this document. If note-takers wish to be excluded from such a list, please inform DSP.

- Note-takers must notify DSP if there is any change in their service for the semester within 3 days of the change (i.e., no longer enrolled in the class, extended illness). If the DSP student drops the course a prorated pay will possibly be determined. The DSP student will still need to sign the Note-Taker Certification Form though to acknowledge receipt of service.

- Note-takers must understand that their notes may need to be clarified on occasion. However, it is absolutely not the responsibility of the note-taker to tutor, transport, or provide other services to the student they are taking notes for. In the event that a student requests such services, the note-taker will decline and inform DSP of the request.

- Certification Forms will only be made for what is on record. Note-takers must email notetake@usc.edu immediately should there be any changes. This would include additional students and/or courses. Failure to do this puts the note-taker at risk of not being compensated for courses and students that are not record with DSP.

Any questions regarding note-taking services should be directed to Christopher Mattson in Disability Services and Programs by calling (213) 740-0776 or emailing notetake@usc.edu.