Notetaker Training
2013-2014

Access and Diversity

The University of British Columbia

Table of Contents

_Toc127939475

1. Introduction to the Notetaking Program

The goals of Access and Diversity (A&D), are to:
- remove barriers and provide opportunities for academic success.
- provide equal access to University services, programs, and facilities.
- ensure fair and consistent treatment of all students.
- create a welcoming environment to foster active participation in the UBC community.

Notetaking is one of the programs run by A&D that helps fulfill these goals.

Access & Diversity pays note-takers, and has since 1991; some disability offices at other post-secondary institutions run volunteer note-taking programs. We pay note-takers in order to show that we value the services our note-takers provide and the quality of the notes they produce. These notes are different than usual class notes in their level of completeness and organization.

Note-taking is an essential support service for many students with disabilities. The need a client may have for note-taking is determined by an Access & Diversity Advisor, based on documented disability and needs assessment.

Each student receiving service has provided current documentation to Access & Diversity and has met rigorous eligibility criteria. This note-taking service allows students with disabilities equal access to lecture materials by "bridging the information gap" that may occur due to the nature of the disability compounded by the use of large classrooms, poor acoustical conditions and/or the need for a public address system.

2. Roles and Responsibilities at Access and Diversity

2.1 Advisors

Access and Diversity Disability Advisors work one-on-one with students with documented disabilities to ensure their full access to education at UBC. A&D Advisors determine the accommodations to which a client is entitled (notetaking, hours per week of tutoring, time extensions for writing exams, adapted course materials or computer software, etc.) and assist clients in accessing these accommodations.

2.2 Student Assistant Coordinator

The Student Assistant Coordinator works with A & D Advisors and the Operations Manager to hire and train student assistants including notetakers, mobility assistants, scribes, library assistants, and exam assistants. If you have any questions about your role as a notetaker or any aspect of the notetaking program, please contact the Student Assistant Coordinator.

2.3 Notetakers

Notetakers provide a valuable academic service by creating clear and detailed class notes for students with disabilities at UBC, ensuring all students have equal access to lecture material. Your job as a notetaker is to provide a clear and detailed record of information and discussion shared in each class. Class notes are to be emailed to your client within 48 hours. This includes lecture material and other details mentioned in class, particularly notes regarding assessments.

It is your responsibility to ensure the client receives notes from each class. If you are absent you must arrange an alternate notetaker. It is helpful to choose a back-up student in advance.

As a note taker you are representing Access & Diversity. Therefore you are expected to be confidential, cooperative, unbiased, and respectful to people with disabilities and to Access & Diversity staff. Sexual, racial, and/or physical harassment will not be tolerated.

Notetakers are not required to provide:

- Notes for readings outside of class (unless requested by the Student Assistant Coordinator)
- Notes for labs (unless requested by the Student Assistant Coordinator)
- Materials handed out during class
- Tutoring, advising or advocacy services

Any requests by your client for additional services should be referred to the Student Assistant Coordinator.

3. Elements of effective notetaking_____

3.1 Appearance of notes

The most important aspect of the appearance of notes is legibility. So first of all, ensure that your handwriting (cursive script) is legible. If your client has difficulty reading it, consider printing.

Second, the more organized your notes are, the easier they are to understand. Here are some standard formatting cues you should use liberally to make the information clear to the reader:

- Different levels of indentations (to separate information)
- Headings and bullets (to organize information)
- Capitalization, underlining, and asterisks, used consistently (to help clarify the information being presented)
- Lists, diagrams, and illustrations

Finally, your pages should not be densely covered with notes. Take care to use wide margins and to avoid cramming words onto the bottoms of pages. A good use of white space allows the note-taker or the client to add more information later.

There are some cases where clients are only able to access typed notes, you will be informed by the Student Assistant Coordinator if this is required.

3.2 Content of notes

Your notes should be as complete as possible. Your job is not to pull out and record only key information but to record as much information as you can, while highlighting the most important information.

As much as possible, the sequence of facts and information should make sense to the reader. The formatting tools we described above are not much use if the information is not complete or well ordered!

Do not repeat ideas but do repeat examples or new ways of saying the information.

If you miss information in a lecture, leave space in your notes to fill in later. Get the missing information from a classmate or seek clarification from the instructor.

Assignment and Tests

It is particularly important to record in detail the following:

- Assignments given to the class including: due dates, scope of the assignment, and other information.
- Exam information: date, length, topic, and other important information.

3.3 Language

To make your notes easy to understand, employ simple sentence constructions to facilitate reading comprehension. When you are unclear about a spelling put "sp?" beside the word in question. You can verify this later. Some symbols and abbreviations are acceptable but try to use them sparingly to avoid confusion. When you put symbols in your notes, make a legend of them like this:

Symbol	Meaning
&	and

Also, write verbs in the simple present or past tense and in the active voice:

✖ He had been having a bad day.
✔ He had a bad day.

Finally, avoid double negatives:

✖ It was not unforeseen
✔ It was unforseen that

3.4 Mechanics of notetaking

Be sure to follow these instructions when writing or typing your notes to improve their legibility and organization:

- Record course name and date at the top right corner of the first page

- Number each page

- Use one side only

- Write with a black fine-point pen, which is easy to read and reproduces well or type your notes

- Provide blank spaces

- At the last page put 'End of Session' to mark the end of your notes

3.5 Examples of notes

POOR NOTES

No clear organizing methods

Too much shorthand

No page number, course title, or date

Poor sentence structure

Not enough white space to add notes in text later

No margin on this side

Uncommon symbols used with no legend

Writing on the other side of the page shows through when photo-copied

Not very legible. This notetaker should probably print and use a darker, felt-tipped pen.

GOOD NOTES

Course name and date are at the top of the page

Psyc. 333
Sept. 6/02

Memory Metaphors

Text is neatly printed and legible

Outline of Lectures on Memory Metaphors (for the next week)
- general background + introduction
- common conception of mind
- examples of the dominant SS + S metaphor
- evaluation of the SS + S metaphor
- alternatives to the SS + S metaphor
- analogical vs. abstract
- conclusions about memory metaphors (about 7 or 8 general conclusions)

"SS + S" is defined below (however, it would be better to use a legend)

⇒ When did consciousness begin?
- Julian Jaynes (a professor @ Princeton) says about 2000 yrs ago
  (this is very recent!)
    - linked to beginnings of language as well
- we think of our mind as a physical space that holds ideas
    ie: shallow mind, open mind, have room in mind

  Jaynes' analysis suggests that the dominant metaphor for mind + consciousness is actual physical space (perhaps like a large room).
  When applied to phenomena of memory, this analogy b/t mind + physical space has 2 important implications:

Headings, levels of indentation, and lists are used liberally to organize information

  1) memories are viewed as discrete objects stored in particular locations
  2) in order to remember you must search for + find the pertinent memory trace

⇒ Examples of "SS + S" Metaphors → "Spatial, Storage, + Search"
① Wax Tablet Metaphor (Thaetetus - Plato, Socrates, + Aristotle talking)
- probably the earliest metaphor for memory
- our mind contains a block of wax
    - small or large block depending on how good memory is

I

A dark pen was used, and only one side of the page was written on, so these notes photocopied clearly

①

Pages are numbered

3.6 Taking notes when online PowerPoint slides are provided

Many instructors provide online notes and PowerPoint slides to assist all students in preparing for their classes and taking notes in class. Please remember the following tips if you are taking notes using online PowerPoint slides or other notes provided in advance by your instructor.

- Add any additional content given in class by the instructor or written on the matter.

- Add as much detail as possible.

- Notes can be added directly onto the PowerPoint handout if there is sufficient space. If not, use an additional sheet of paper. Check with your client to see if they have a preference.

- To allow for more space, sometimes it is helpful to print out fewer PowerPoint slides per page.

- Ensure your notes are neat and legible. Use a black pen or type your notes onto the slides.

3.7 Taking notes on a laptop

If you are hired to take handwritten notes and a client requests that you take notes via a laptop computer, you are not required to do so. However, we are aware that increasing numbers of students are taking notes with their laptop. Please note that the same principles of organizing handwritten notes apply to taking notes via a computer.

If you provided typed notes with your application form it would be helpful to continue to provide typed notes, especially for Arts courses.

4. Confidentiality

The BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act protects the privacy of personal information in the custody or under the control of a public body such as UBC. Personal information is any recorded information that uniquely identifies a person, such as their name, address, telephone number, age, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.

Notetakers must not give out any information about their clients to a third party. Such information includes, but is not limited to, clients' names and information about their disabilities. Notetakers will not be given the client's name or any information about their client's disability. They will be given their client's email address which sometimes identifies the name of the client.

5. JOB DUTIES AND BOUNDARIES

Please remember that you are being hired by Access & Diversity to perform an important service function. Those students hired must demonstrate academic excellence and enthusiasm for learning and must be open to feedback from the Access & Diversity client. Notes must be taken in the manner most beneficial to the recipient.

Your job as a note-taker is to record as accurately and readably as possible the information and discussion shared in class. To achieve this, you should actively solicit feedback from your client on the quality and usefulness of the notes. If your client's identity is unknown to you, or if they do not want you to approach them in class, you can approach Janice McGill in the Crane Resource Centre for feedback; she will contact your client.

You should not be supplementing your notes with class readings, etc. Nor is it your job to:

- tutor and review the course material (although you may be asked to clarify your notes)

- counsel or advise your client

- advocate for the client

Refer the client to their Access & Diversity Disability Advisor for the above needs.