May 18th, 3:00 PM

Note Taking: Moving from a Volunteer to a Paid System

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OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

Note Taking: Moving from a Volunteer to a Paid System

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May 18, 2017

Summary

In this session we will discuss the following:

▶ Our History

▶ Current Practices

▶ Looking ahead

Mission of SDS

The mission of Student Disability Services (SDS) is to partner with the campus community in creating equitable access to eligible students while promoting disability-inclusive diversity.

SDS also partners with our students as they work to achieve their academic goals by helping them recognize their potential and removing possible barriers to their education.

Who we serve

Students with one or more of the following:

- ADHD
- Learning Disabilities
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Mobility Disabilities
- Sensory Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Chronic Health Disabilities
- Temporary Injuries

Campuses SDS serves:

▶ Knoxville

▶ Nashville

Special Student Populations:

▶ Law School

▶ Veterinary School

▶ Distance Education

▶ Student Athlete

Note Taking Delivery Models

Most schools utilize one of the following note taking delivery methods

▶ Paid note taker system

   ▶ Hourly rate

   ▶ Program may be funded through state or University's general operating budget

▶ Volunteer

   ▶ Gift card, certificate and service hours

   ▶ stipend

▶ Hybrid (combination of paid & volunteer systems)

   ▶ Seek volunteers first then move to paid system when a note taker is not available

   ▶ Instructor or Teaching Assistant (TA) may provide notes

Our History

Under the volunteer note taking system

On average per semester:

- ▶ 138 students approved for a note taker
- ▶ 47 utilized the accommodation
- ▶ 153 classes requested
- ▶ 35% fill rate

Strategies to address our concerns

- ▶ SDS staff conducted research of peer institutions and SEC schools for best practices
  - ▶ Findings showed that most schools were not tracking data
  - ▶ Reviewed various note taking models i.e. paid note taker vs. volunteer

- ▶ SDS staff consistently tracked note taking data over span of several semesters
  - ▶ Presented findings to senior leadership to seek support in addressing our concerns

First Step

- Summer 2012-Piloted a paid note taker system
  - $8.50/hour
  - Created internal database to track note taking requests/matches
  - Implemented SharePoint as a means for students to access notes

RESULTS: 35% to 88% fill rate!

Second Step

▶ Established and hired a Coordinator for Note Taker services late fall 2012 to manage note taking services and recruit qualified note takers

▶ In addition, the office engaged in concerted efforts to promote note taking services and to attract qualified note takers

RESULTS: 97% fill rate!

This is How We Do It

Staff

- ▶ Note Taker Coordinator
    - ▶ Manages day-to-day operation
- ▶ Administrative Assistant
    - ▶ Supervises temporary and student staff
    - ▶ Oversees note taker new hire process
- ▶ Temporary positions
    - ▶ Assists with processing requests and matching classes
    - ▶ Assists administrative assistant with new hire process
- ▶ Student employees
    - ▶ Verifies note files and corresponds with note takers

Recruiting Note Takers

- ▶ Note Takers paid a rate equivalent to $8.50/per hour
- ▶ SDS website
- ▶ Email class announcement to professors
- ▶ Recruitment Fair
- ▶ Orientation
- ▶ Ads in Daily Beacon (UTK student newspaper)
- ▶ Grades First
- ▶ Welcome Week Events
- ▶ Flyers
- ▶ Directed request sent to campus leaders and residence halls
- ▶ SDS staff class announcement
- ▶ Campus partners
- ▶ Digital displays in heavy traffic buildings (library, student union, etc.)

Delivery of Note Taking Services

▶ ClockWork system stores student and course information

▶ Separate Excel spreadsheet tracks requests/matches. Records note submissions

▶ Specific email account

▶ Recruitment emails are sent to students enrolled in the classes where the accommodation is required

▶ Interested students respond to email or classes are matched with students who registered their classes online

▶ Selected student is emailed hiring instructions

▶ Must complete mandatory online training and pass quiz with 80%

▶ Notes are uploaded to ClockWork

▶ Follow-up emails sent to note takers for late/missing notes

▶ Recruit and hire new note taker when issue is not resolved

▶ Alternative note taking methods

Where Are We Now?

- Spring 2016
  - 168 students requested
  - 679 classes requested
    - 94.72% fill rate

- Spring 2017
  - 218 students requested
  - 878 classes requested
    - 99.89% fill rate

Other Considerations…

- ▶ Alternative plan for more efficient database
- ▶ Request for additional full-time staff
  - ▶ Growth
  - ▶ Service delivery
  - ▶ Student employees:
    - ▶ limited availability
    - ▶ limited access to University systems (IRIS, Grades First, etc.)
- ▶ Targeted recruitment of hard to fill classes
  - ▶ Job fairs for specific colleges
  - ▶ Alternative accommodations when appropriate

QUESTIONS

Student Disability Services

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