



YALE COLLEGE COUNCIL
REPORT ON IMPROVING UNIVERSITY
NOTE-TAKING SYSTEM

December 2013

YCC Report on Improving University Note-Taking System

Background

1. Currently over 300 sets of notes each semester are distributed by the Resource Office of Disabilities (ROD) to around 600 students for various reasons, such as shoulder/hand injuries, concussions, and prolonged excused absences.
2. YCC received complaints from students about delays in receiving notes and a relatively low quality in some of the notes that were received.
3. Notes were distributed by email from an administrative assistant at the ROD to each individual student.
4. ROD did not have a mechanism to review the quality of notes before they were distributed to students.

Recommendations

1. Creation of an online private workspace through Classes V2 in which students can publish and receive notes anonymously and efficiently, which the Resource Office can monitor.
2. Creation of a video module of Dean of Academic Affairs Mark Schenker's note-taking seminar to publish online and require note-takers to watch.
3. Publish clear steps for the note-taking process in Teaching Students with Disabilities Guide.
4. Create a succinct checklist with all steps for both note-takers and students receiving notes that can be distributed and published online.
5. Create and send out periodic surveys for feedback.
6. Establish an organized recruitment process for long-term and short-term note-takers.
7. Create a new student job position in the ROD who would work closely with Director York and other employees to recruit long-term and short-term note takers and oversee the implementation of quality control.

Results

1. ROD together with YCC have officially created the position of a Note-taking Services Assistant (NTSA) in the Resource Office of Disabilities. The NTSA will work closely with ROD Director and the senior administration in the office to help create the Classes V2 system, establish a long-term recruitment process for note-takers, create periodic surveys for feedback, test the effectiveness of a checklist outline the note-taking process, research general note-taking strategies, and work with the YCC to create a video module on note-taking (see job listing below).
2. Newly appointed Associate Director Tony Kulikowski to the ROD has been tasked with spearheading the implementation of YCC's recommendations as his first and continual project in the office.

3. YCC is currently establishing a task force that will work with the new student employee at ROD to create the checklist, video module, and Classes V2 workspace.
4. Preliminary work on the checklist has begun.
5. Contact with Information Technology Services (ITS) and the Dean of Academic Affairs at the Yale College Dean's Office (YCDO) has been established for their involvement in the systems' improvement.

Note-taking Services Assistant Job Listing

Note taking Services Assistant:

Under the direction of the Associate Director of the Resource Office on Disabilities (ROD) and in coordination with the Sr. Administration of the same office, the student will:

1. Work with classes V2 administrators to explore the possibilities of using the framework to deposit, hold and dispense notes within an dedicated security system that will protect the distribution of notes to only those who qualify for their receipt and will protect the anonymity of the recipient. As such an operation appears feasible, work toward its implementation and long term use. Set up systems to monitor its effectiveness.
2. Taking the current recruitment process used by ROD, expand means of recruitment for potential note takers to be tapped with minimal time delay once a need is known. Set up a system for ROD staff to use to assign new note takers. Maintain e-mail list.
3. Create periodic surveys for note takers and recipients. Send to note takers; coordinate the sending of the survey to note recipient with ROD staff.
4. Create and test the effectiveness of a checklist to be distributed to note takers and recipients to define responsibilities and expectations. Provide orientation to new student note takers.
5. Research different note taking techniques published to reflect different styles of teaching, lectures vs. seminars vs. sections, different subject areas and different uses of embellishing slides and lecture notes used for all in the classroom. Create summaries to distribute to note takers.
6. Work with YCC delegates and Yale staff to create a video module on note taking strategies that can be stored and distributed to newly hired note takers. Develop a system to verify that all note takers will watch the video within the first week of their employment as a note taker.

The position will pay \$14/hour. Time estimated per week will average 8 hours with more concentrated time needed for the job at the beginnings of each semester and especially at the beginning of a new academic year when a new roster of students need orientation for the first time. Hours of work are flexible but will be dictated by the volume of work to be done differing for form week to another.

The work can be done remotely with in person meetings or e-mail communications conducted with ROD staff for departmental coordination.

Skills Required:

1. Strong written communications skills.
2. Independent, self-starting worker; reliable, honest.
3. General knowledge of primary business applications software and concept knowledge with classes V2.
4. Good attention to fine detail.

Applicants interested should e-mail judith.york@yale.edu and anthony.kulikowski@yale.edu

Contact Information

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