

# Academic Affairs Manual (ACD)

## ACD 304–06: Commercial Note-Taking Services

Effective: 5/1/1990

Revised: 7/1/2011

### Purpose

To clarify the university's position on commercial note-taking services and inform faculty of procedures for limiting commercial note-taking access to courses or course material

### Sources

17 *United States Code* §§ 101 *et seq.*

Graduate Council

Office of the Provost of the University

### Background

Commercial note-taking services obtain class notes for sale to students. A service may attempt to send its own agent into a class or may make arrangements with a teaching assistant or a student enrolled in the class to obtain class notes in written or recorded form. However, anyone who is not an admitted, paying student registered for a course may be denied access to class meetings by the instructor (see [ACD 304–05](#), “Course Enrollment/Attendance”).

An instructor who wishes to allow a commercial service to publish class notes may want to consider the pedagogical value of students taking their own notes. Both common law and statute permit faculty to prohibit the selling or other commercialization of recordings or notes derived from their class lectures, or from written materials distributed as a part of course work.

### Policy

Written permission must be secured from the official instructor(s) of the class in order to sell the instructor's oral communication in the form of notes. Notes must have the notetaker's name as well as the instructor's name, the course number, and the date.

[Faculty members](#) who wish to prohibit the selling or other commercialization of recordings or notes derived from their class lectures may do so by asserting a copyright interest in such lectures.

Note: The copyright protection of spoken words rests in common law. Copyright regarding notes or other written or recorded works is statutory.

Faculty members can protect both types of copyright by appropriate announcements in the class at the beginning of the term, such as an oral statement that all contents of the lectures, including written materials distributed to the class, are under copyright protection, or a written statement to that effect on the course syllabus and on any written materials distributed.

All graduate [students](#) who are hired for class/course support or who are graduate teaching or research assistants/associates for a specific course may not take or provide notes for that course to commercial note-taking services or students. An exception may be made by the course instructor(s) on a case-by-case basis as an authorized support service for a [disabled](#) student. This policy covers all commercial activities (e.g., note-taking, paid review sessions) that might be associated with a course for which the assistant/associate has assigned responsibilities.

### **Cross-Reference**

For related information, see [ACD 304–05](#), “Course Enrollment/Attendance.”