

## **Final Report, Student Accessibility and Accommodation Faculty Advisory Board, April 2022**

The goal of this report is to convey a sense of the Student Accessibility and Accommodation Faculty Advisory Board (henceforth SAA FAB) has been engaged in for the previous few years as well as to offer some ideas about work that might be the focus of the faculty in the area of accessibility and accommodation going forward. We hope this document might help maintain the “institutional memory” of the university with regard to this work, which should be important given current plans to revamp the structure of faculty governance. For this reason, this report provides an overview of several years of this body’s activities (from 2018-2019 to the present).

### **Overview of our work**

The SAA FAB existed as an informal group gathered by Peggy Perno to consult with faculty members about important SAA matters (such as testing and flexible attendance procedures). As a result of consultation between Perno and Tromly, in fall 2018 SAA FAB took on a more institutionalized and faculty-driven shape. For the first time, a faculty member chaired the committee and prepared the agenda and the FAB met more regularly (three times a semester). This group is united by a conviction that accessibility and accommodations are crucial to our institution’s mission of providing an outstanding education to all our students, as well as the legal obligations of the university to provide “students with disabilities with appropriate academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services that are necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in the school's program.” Through our work with faculty and students in past years, we have confronted the reality that some students with disabilities of various kinds face barriers to their success on our campus, many of which have to do with faculty ignorance about accessibility and accommodation and sometimes even a lack of commitment to following through on providing accommodations to students who need them in order to succeed on an even playing field with their peers. As we articulate later in the document, we believe that there is a need for “culture change” in the way faculty members engage with accessibility and accommodation, an idea made particularly clear to us by interacting with students.

There are further reasons that work in this area should be a priority for faculty governance. Faculty engagement with students and disability is also a crucial part of our Diversity Strategic Plan and an urgent matter for the student body, something which has become especially clear to us with the creation of the Disabled Student Union and MIBU in 2022. It is also necessary to stress that the SAA staff is small and overtaxed, and faculty input is needed in order to maintain the work they do which is so essential for the functioning of our university.

We believe that there is a strong need for faculty to become more engaged in this area in the future, particularly in light of the increasing numbers of students who arrive at Puget Sound registered with SAA (roughly one quarter of the entire student body in recent years). For several years, the chair of SAA FAB (Tromly) has hoped to pass off work on SAA matters to a regular standing committee under the Senate so that accessibility and accommodation can gain the attention they deserve. The “advisory board” model is imperfect, as we have relied on a core of committed faculty who take on this work on top of many other service obligations and other

commitments. We have been in consultation with the Faculty Governance Working Group in spring 2022 with the goal of finding a good “home” for this work in the system of faculty governance. If this reform moves forward, we should be able to increase the scope of faculty work in this area and also increase the number and diversity of faculty involved in this crucial area of work. For a list of faculty who have taken part in this body over past years, see Appendix I below.

In 2018, we adopted the following Mission Statement:

The mission of the SAA Faculty Advisory Board is to facilitate communication and promote common understanding between Office of Student Accommodation and Accessibility and faculty members, and to assist faculty in teaching, implementing accommodations, and understanding students with various disabilities. It does this by providing spaces and events where the perspectives and concerns of faculty and SAA can be discussed and creative solutions can be crafted. The committee will also discuss SAA policies and procedures for which faculty input is needed, including challenges that arise in the implementation of accommodations.

We would like to identify the main directions of our work over past years in fulfillment of this Mission Statement.

Facilitate “communication and promote common understanding between Office of Student Accommodation and Accessibility and faculty members”:

The SAA staff runs a complex and hugely time-consuming system of evaluating and administering accommodations, but it also liaises with faculty about how accommodations should be carried out (a task involving answering queries and sometimes protracted email or in-person exchanges with faculty members). The SAA FAB identified as an area of need a group of faculty that would serve as a bridge between SAA and faculty, helping to facilitate mutual understanding and sometimes trying to bridge differences in perspective that emerge in the complicated space where accommodations and pedagogy meet.

We have pursued this task in several ways. In 2019-2020, we revamped the “faculty-facing” part of the SAA website, organizing the material based on different accommodations rather than according to kinds of disability on the logic that such an organization would help faculty members to better understand specific accommodations and why students need them (during 2019-2020). In 2021, we helped Peggy Perno rewrite communications to faculty, including by reworking the automated letters sent out about student accommodations each semester and the language conveyed to faculty in “Accommodate” on PeopleSoft. The chair of this group was also involved in many email exchanges with faculty members and SAA staff regarding specific accommodation cases (in a consultative capacity).

We believe that the “communication” and “common understanding” function of the work of the Faculty Advisory Board is vitally important and should be continued in the future. Accessibility and accommodations are a challenging area of activity for faculty and staff as they bring together the welfare of our students, the pedagogy and class management of our faculty, and the university’s legal responsibilities. We believe that a group of faculty with knowledge in this area and strong relationships with SAA staff plays an essential role in keeping SAA and faculty

working together constructively, particularly when certain accommodations (or changes in them) generate confusion and disagreement (as happened when procedures for implementation of the note-taking accommodation occurred in 2019-2020, as discussed below).

Assisting faculty in “teaching, implementing accommodations, and understanding students with various disabilities”:

From the outset, we have envisioned our group as a place where we could seek to affect change in practices surrounding accessibility and accommodations. In pursuit of this objective we have sponsored and organized several workshops and events for faculty including: a Faculty Workshop called “Teaching Students on the Autism Spectrum” with Christopher Jones, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA (fall 2018); two presentations by SAA Peer Mentors entitled “Accommodations, Disabilities, and Teaching: Perspectives from Students” (Spring 2019 and Fall 2021); a Faculty Workshop with Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D. entitled “Teaching to the Whole Classroom: Applying Principles of Universal Design to Curricular Design and Pedagogy” (Spring 2020); a connected set of Wed.&4 sessions: “Supporting Student Mental Health Online” (with Gary McCall, Jennifer Pitonyak, Anna Valiavska, Erin Potts, Ph.D (CHWS); Leslie Pellegrine, P.A. (CHWS)) and “Practical Approaches For Supporting Students with Anxiety” (Ellen Carruth and Jennifer Pitonyak) (spring 2021); and a Wed.&4 on “How neurodiversity can enrich the classroom” (spring 2022). We have made electronic records of some of these events available at the Faculty Advisory Board section of the SAA website (behind password protection).

These faculty-facing events have been a particularly rewarding part of this group’s work, as they have allowed faculty interested in this area to learn from each other as well as from some outside experts. However, we have also been aware that attendance of some of these events has been limited (particularly since the pandemic).

One area that we have only made limited strides in is connecting with students with disabilities. The two presentations involving SAA Peer Mentors, students who are employed to help their peers registered with SAA with social and life activities, were wonderful events that brought to faculty attention some of the challenges our students with disabilities face. In 2021-2022, the SAA FAB reached out to the Disabled Students Union and held a very productive meeting where we discussed student concerns regarding accessibility and accommodation, many of which dealt with difficult interactions with faculty. We believe that students were grateful that we listened closely to them, but this work to build common understanding needs to be continued by whatever committee undertakes SAA work in the future (including by inviting a student representative to sit on such a body).

Discussing “SAA policies and procedures for which faculty input is needed”:

This is a complicated area for faculty involvement. It is our belief that faculty does not have authority to determine the nuts and bolts of many SAA matters, such as what the roster of approved accommodations (and, of course, which students receive them). However, we have proceeded with the understanding that it is useful for the SAA director to have a group of interested faculty to consult with about SAA policies and procedures when this is desired. After all, some accommodations (but not all) offer flexibility on the faculty member’s part in

implementation (for instance, the note-taking accommodation or even some attendance-related accommodations in which faculty determine how many absences are allowed).

With this understanding, we have been involved in working on specific accommodations that have proved challenging for faculty and SAA alike. When the pandemic struck, Peggy Perno and Julie Christoph composed a communication on accessibility and remote instruction with input from Benjamin Tromly (see Appendix III). (Tromly offered to help with the drafting but now regrets having attaching his name to it, as he believes that this raised questions about the role of the FAB vis-à-vis university administration). We spent a good deal of time in 2020-2021 working on solutions to the issue of the note-taking accommodation after the system of paying student note-takers was made legally unfeasible by the pandemic in spring 2020 (and then was not revived by the university administration). Peggy Perno and Ben Tromly also appeared at the Faculty Senate to discuss this issue in fall 2021. Our best solution to this problem was to create a menu of different options for successfully executing the accommodation in the hopes that there will be models that different faculty members would find satisfactory.

We believe that it is valuable for SAA staff to be able to work with a group of faculty members who have knowledge and interest in the area of accessibility and accommodation. Of course, the decision-making authority on specific matters of policy regarding accessibility and accommodation is the head of SAA, who has the expertise and legal resources to understand our obligations as an institution. Nevertheless, the opportunity to get regular faculty feedback enhances SAA, while also giving faculty a say in how and why accommodations are implemented on campus.

### **Ideas for Future Work in the Area of Accessibility and Accommodation**

Below are some ideas for future faculty work in the areas of accessibility and accommodation. We hope that these general ideas might provide some directions for work or potential charges in the future, especially once this area of work has come under faculty governance.

#### **1) Furthering Institutional Change surrounding disability on campus**

We devoted our last two meetings of spring 2022 to discussion of further steps we think should be considered in pursuit of the mission of assuring greater accessibility, effectively implementing accommodations, and, more generally, of meeting student needs at our university. Our meeting with the DSU representatives drove home to us the need for a “culture change” among faculty in approaching accessibility and accommodation. Faculty work such as organizing trainings, talks and workshops can be useful and create fruitful partnerships across campus. However, one-off events are not enough to bring about meaningful changes, in part because they have tended to draw a self-selecting group of faculty who are already interested in disability.

While we believe that there needs to be more structural support for considering disability as an aspect of diversity, we have yet to identify practical steps to further this goal. For instance, we discussed the possibility of working toward modifying Faculty Evaluation Procedures and Criteria (the “buff document”) so that it would mention accessibility and accommodation directly. However, we discarded this idea as impractical, at least in the near future. In a very

preliminary way, we identified some other institutional mechanisms that might change campus culture in this area such as the Department or Program Self-Study Questions for Program Reviews, Academic advising training sessions, or the Provost's language for insertion into faculty syllabuses. At the very least, we believe that it is important to continue seeking means to communicate about accessibility and accommodation in ways that would reach a wider range of faculty members (one idea that arose in our discussions was to use chair meetings for such communications).

## **2) Maintaining Contact with Students, including DSU**

We believe that any future committee dealing with SAA matters should continue and further develop our practices of establishing dialogue and collaboration with students in at least two forms: a) meetings with and presentations by the SAA peer mentors and b) interactions and meetings with DSU or other future student groups. In both cases, such work offers faculty members first-hand evidence (sometimes sobering!) of how accessibility and accommodation are dealt with on campus and offers the possibility of creating fruitful connections between students, faculty and SAA that build trust and mutual understanding between all parties.

## **3) Work on Foreign Language Substitution**

The experience of students who seek the Foreign Language Substitution (FLS) due to disability has been the cause of concern for many students and SAA staff for years. The list of courses approved as substitutes for language courses is quite small and outdated, and, we understand, it is only now being revisited by the Curriculum Committee in spring 2022. This has meant that students seeking the FLS often have to petition the ASC to have specific courses approved toward this graduation requirement. Our concern is that unreasonable demands are being placed on students, and moreover on that part of the student body that might experience considerable difficulty in navigating the process.

In the future, we hope that the Curriculum Committee to adopt a procedure for regularly adding courses to the FLS requirement. In addition, we encourage the Curriculum Committee to reconsider the FLS policy as contained in the Bulletin with an eye to simplifying matters for students. Here are some potential issues in the FLS that might be revisited:

- o The stipulation that “the courses must be outside of their Core Requirements and the department of their first major.” This has proven confusing for students in the past.
- o The stipulation that “students must take two pre-approved courses from a single cultural area that they have not already taken.” This clause seems ambiguous: does it mean “have not already taken at Puget Sound”? Does it mean that the student should know that the course counts toward the FLS at the time of taking it? We think this clause could be removed.
- o Perhaps we could revisit the requirement that the student take two courses in a single cultural area. We understand the rationale that the purpose of this requirement is to somewhat replicate the language requirement as a means of preparing for global citizenship (ie. giving depth in a single culture is the target).

#### **4) Establish Best Practices for Captioning of Video Content**

Members of the Educational Technology Team have raised the idea that the university might want to clarify standard practices surrounding the use of captions in video content across campus settings.

#### **Appendix I: SAA Faculty Advisory Board Members**

2018-2019: James Bernhard, Julie Christoph (ex-officio), Nick Kontogeorgopolous, Mita Mahato, Peggy Perno (ex-officio), Benjamin Tromly (chair), Mike Valentine, Sheryl Zylstra.

2019-2020: James Bernhard, Julie Christoph (ex-officio), Peggy Perno (ex-officio), Rachael Sheldon, Courtney Thatcher, Benjamin Tromly (chair), Mike Valentine, Sheryl Zylstra.

2020-2021: Francoise Belot, James Bernhard, Margot Casson, Julie Christoph (ex-officio), Rob Hutchinson, Sam Liao, Peggy Perno (ex-officio), Courtney Thatcher, Benjamin Tromly (chair), Mike Valentine, Sheryl Zylstra.

2021-2022: Francoise Belot, James Bernhard, Margot Casson, Julie Christoph (ex-officio), Eric Orlin, Zaixin Hong, Peggy Perno, Courtney Thatcher, Benjamin Tromly (chair), Mike Valentine, Renee Watling (spring), Sheryl Zylstra (fall).

#### **Appendix II: Message to Faculty on Remote Instruction, Accessibility and Accommodations, fall 2020**

Peggy Perno, Benjamin Tromly, and Julie Christoph

Q: How is SAA operating during the pandemic?

SAA is working virtually, providing services via phone meetings and Zoom. Students should schedule meetings as they normally do; using their Accommodate Account or email [saa@pugetsound.edu](mailto:saa@pugetsound.edu). Faculty can email [pperno@pugetsound.edu](mailto:pperno@pugetsound.edu) or [saa@pugetsound.edu](mailto:saa@pugetsound.edu) for assistance with concerns, accessibility questions and implementing accommodations. A resource for faculty discussion and liaison on accessibility and accommodation issues is the SAA Faculty Advisory Board, chaired by Benjamin Tromly ([btromly@pugetsound.edu](mailto:btromly@pugetsound.edu)) in 2020-2021. The SAA Faculty Advisory Board works closely with Peggy Perno and is eager to respond to feedback and requests. As we progress through the semester things may come up that we have not anticipated, and we will continue to update this GoogleDoc. Please do not hesitate to give SAA feedback.

Q: How can I ensure accessibility of courses in a remote teaching?

As with in-person teaching, instructors should strive to make their courses accessible to students while teaching remotely. Making classes accessible to all students regardless of ability makes for good teaching. The Office of Student Accessibility and Accommodation recommends that you consider the following methods of ensuring accessibility in a remote setting:

- providing different modes of evaluation in your courses (oral, written, synchronous, asynchronous)
- providing opportunities for students to contribute in the chat bar as well as orally
- providing text in clear fonts
- recording synchronous class meetings in the event that a student is not able to attend

· using closed captioning whenever possible (see the tips on Captioning in Week 3 of the Summer Ed Tech Workshop Series)

Accessibility issues related to technology (ie. not being able to connect to the internet):

Faculty and staff: the Technology Service Desk is the place to start when there are technology issues. Technology Services Desk - servicedesk@pugetsound.edu or 253.879.8585 #2

Students: the Student Technology Support Desk is there to help troubleshoot technology issues. Student Technology Support Desk - servicedesk@pugetsound.edu or 253.879.8585 #3.

Q: Is COVID-19 something that falls under the accommodations rubric?

Generally speaking, faculty should treat students who contract COVID-19 the same ways they approach students who contract other longer-term illnesses (e.g., mono), providing opportunities for students to make up lost work (e.g., a one-time extension for an assignment or an opportunity for students to make up missed coursework). Keep in mind that cases of COVID-19 may fluctuate in severity over time and can sometimes worsen at about day 9 or later. If a student with COVID-19 asks for specific accommodations normally governed by SAA (e.g., extra time on exams, flexibility in attendance and assignment due dates) or can only remain in a course provided that certain accommodations are made, then those students should be referred to SAA for assessment for a temporary accommodation.

Q: How will faculty be notified of COVID-19-related accommodations? Will SAA use the same interface for any student having COVID-related accommodations as we use for other accommodations?

Yes, SAA will use the Accommodate platform, as usual, to notify faculty. The move to remote learning does not affect the fundamentals of the accommodations process. Students will contact you to discuss their accommodations in relation to your specific course, and you will approve Accommodation Letters on the Accommodate platform. It is expected that many of the accommodations commonly granted to students will continue to be provided in the remote setting (e.g., Extra time on tests and exams, flexibility in attendance or due dates etc.)

Q: How will test-related accommodations be handled in a remote setting?

Testing Remotely:

Because of the wide range of time zones and student anxiety around technology failures during exams, we discourage the use of timed, synchronous exams during remote learning. Students who are anxious about being timed out or about Internet lags are unlikely to be able to perform to the best of their ability during a timed exam. There are many innovative, pedagogically creative suggestions from faculty at Puget Sound and from our Educational Technologists available on the Summer 2020 Educational Technology Workshop Series Canvas site, especially in Week 4: Creating, Monitoring, and Grading Online Assessments

To provide an environment for reduced distractions (for all students), we advise that you mute all students during the exam and ask them to use the private chat to send you any questions they may have during the exam.

SAA Proctoring:

If you choose to offer a proctored online synchronous exam that you will be monitoring via video, SAA will proctor the exam via video for students in your class who have exam accommodations to provide extended observation time.

SAA does not have any software or special programs to proctor exams taken on a student's personal computer and/or in a remote location. We will use Zoom to provide a reasonable level of observation. SAA will not receive or distribute exams, the student will receive and return the exam in the same manner as the rest of the class.

Students will do a virtual exam booking through Accommodate. While we are remote, faculty will not be uploading exams through the faculty module. You receive a confirmation email and be asked to respond to four questions:

1. Are you video monitoring this exam for the rest of the class?
2. Is the date and time correct?
3. Are you allowing a calculator or note card?
4. How can we contact you if a student has a question?

Q: Can faculty require students to turn on cameras during class?

It is generally reasonable to set the expectation that students have their camera on during synchronous class meetings. Technology difficulties should be referred to Educational Technology. If a student wishes to turn off their camera due to a disability-related reason they should be referred to SAA.

Q: What are some considerations when asking students for feedback on their needs?

Faculty have asked about the possibility of giving students questionnaires at the beginning of class and what kinds of questions to ask students in order to elicit important information that could guide the structure of the class. Students welcome questions about their concerns, things they find particularly challenging and what helps them to function best in class. Asking students about their hobbies also gives many clues to their strengths, experiences and how they prefer to process information. I also suggest asking them what they are most concerned about.

It is not appropriate to solicit information about a specific diagnosis (e.g., do you have a learning difference), but it is appropriate to ask a general question like "How do you learn best?"

Q: How can I design my remote classes to be accessible to all students?

The transition to remote learning impacts different students in different ways. Some students may find that learning in a remote format allows them to better deal with their disabilities, while others may find them more challenging. While we are legally required to provide accommodations to students with disabilities who could not access our courses without accommodation, we should strive to make our classes accessible to all students (a universal design perspective aims to create an environment in which all students can thrive). The following are some general items of advice regarding remote instruction and accessibility.

Providing a consistent learning environment: Students like a predictable format and can become flustered if the instructor changes the structure or rules. At the start of the semester, the instructor should describe how the different components of the course cohere (accessing synchronous meetings, the Canvas page, office hours etc.), while preparing students for the possibility that some aspects of the course may change. It is also helpful to provide learning goals and outlines before each class.

Reducing Student Anxiety: Remote learning can add to student anxiety. What if I am late because of my internet connection? What if the instructor speaks too fast? Will the class be recorded? What if I do not understand a concept? What if I get stuck on the homework? It is helpful to address the possible "what ifs" upfront. For instance, in your syllabus and on the first day of class you can describe class policies surrounding technology (e.g., If a student cannot connect to the internet during a class session, does this count as an absence? etc.)



Being mindful of student mental health: It is possible that mental health concerns will increase among students due to the strains of the pandemic and economic disruption. Instructors should be cognizant of the special problems facing their students and put particular emphasis on maintaining communication in office hours and providing reassurance when appropriate. CHWS is also working remotely and students can be referred to it.

Providing an interactive learning experience: Some students who normally shy away from group discussions are reporting that classroom discussion helps them stay focused while learning remotely. If doing group work, try to provide students with clear instructions and guidelines.

Keeping students engaged online: Students in Spring reported that instructors sometimes spoke too quickly online and were hard to follow (internet service can make this problem worse). Instructors should try to speak clearly. They can also try to keep classes fresh by mixing up class presentations. For instance, they can move on camera to make class more dynamic or provide outlines, diagrams, short videos, discussion, and question and answer periods.

For students with slow processing, consider providing potential class questions before the class. This helps students who might take longer to process class materials to participate in class while navigating the online learning environment.

Considering note sharing in class: Though some students have accommodations to receive notes from other students, we encourage faculty to consider note-sharing arrangements in classes as a matter of course, asking students to prepare notes for the entire class on a rotating basis. Note-sharing as a useful pedagogical tool for building community, helping students learn from more experienced peers, and helping you to get a sense of student comprehension. Brielle Harbin's 2020 (pre-pandemic) article on how she's used collaborative note-taking in her class at the US Naval Academy offers a model for making such an arrangement: Collaborative Note-Taking: A Tool for Creating a More Inclusive College Classroom (shared by permission of author) and the Chronicle article that highlights it to level the playing field and help build classroom community: Teaching: The Power of Group Note-Taking.

### **Appendix III: Message to Faculty on Note-Taking, fall 2020**

Dear colleagues,

As students register for accommodations for fall semester, you may be receiving notification that you have a student in your class who has a note-taking accommodation. We write now to provide more details about how the note-taking accommodation will work this semester. As you may know, in the past, we have hired students to serve as note-takers. This semester, that is not possible because of the specific employment laws and compliance requirements associated with remote work from jurisdictions outside the state of Washington.

Trying to think through a solution for this semester has led us to reconsider the note-taking accommodation more broadly, in a few ways:

1. Frequently, the paid note-taker position has not been adequate as a means to provide notes in a timely fashion to students who are entitled to that accommodation: it often takes several weeks to complete formal hiring processes, and--even after hiring is complete--there are often times when no notes are available because the note-taker is ill or otherwise absent.
2. Quality control in the notes has been challenging. Though it is not an expectation that faculty review the students' notes, the fact that faculty have not had opportunity to

see the notes means that some students have received notes that have been inadequate or inaccurate.

3. As the remote portion of spring semester made evident, all students can benefit from assistance in keeping up with course material. Particularly in the online environment, it is easy to miss points in a lecture--or to benefit from others' impressions of the importance of a point in lecture or discussion. While students who have the note-taking accommodation must receive notes, all students can benefit from seeing others' notes on a class session.

As with many things in the past months, a disruption to our normal ways of doing things has prompted us to rethink and to try to find ways to operate differently and better.

In classes in which there is a student who has a note-taking accommodation, Student Accessibility and Accommodation will be reaching out to faculty members to ask them to set up a note-sharing system in classes in which a student has a note-taking accommodation. As with all accommodations, the faculty member, SAA, and the student will partner to find the best way to implement the accommodation in that class. Some ways that we can imagine include the following:

1. Students in the class rotate note-taking responsibilities on a schedule, with each person taking a turn--much as many faculty committees do for minutes. Notes could be posted in a Google Drive by students directly or posted in Canvas by faculty members after review.
2. Students contribute collaboratively to a shared set of notes in a GoogleDoc or other collaborative space.
3. When relevant, faculty members share slides with the class and thus reduce the need for note-taking.

We believe that these kinds of communal note-taking opportunities will have pedagogical benefits for all students, not just those who have a note-taking accommodation. Often, explaining something to others is the best way to learn. Being asked to share notes with others raises the importance of note-taking to a new level and normalizes the practice of taking notes.

Collaborative note-taking has benefits for faculty, as well. Though faculty are not expected to correct notes or to check accuracy, being able to see the notes enables faculty to see what students have understood from classes on a daily basis, and that knowledge enables you to follow up on concepts that may need more attention--or that do not need to be discussed in as much depth. Having a shared project also helps students to connect with each other.

Though there are many advantages to using collaborative note-taking rather than a paid note-taker, this is a change--and one that has been clarified very close to the start of the semester. The Office of Student Accessibility and Accommodation as well as the Student Accessibility and Accommodation Faculty Advisory Board are happy to work with faculty members to design a fitting note-taking arrangement for a class. The SAA Faculty Advisory Board is also planning to discuss note-taking this fall and prepare some more detailed suggestions for how to incorporate note-taking into courses.

To help you prepare in the immediate future, we have a few resources:

- Our own faculty presented ideas on note-taking at the Wednesday at 4 session How to Prepare Students to Take Effective Notes, January 29, 2020.
- Brielle Harbin's 2020 article on how she's used collaborative note-taking in her class at the US Naval Academy (Collaborative Note-Taking: A Tool for Creating a More Inclusive College Classroom, shared by permission of author) and the related Chronicle article explain how collaborative note-taking can level the playing field and help build classroom community.
- We will also be hosting a drop-in conversation for your questions and suggestions about this change in accommodations tomorrow, Friday, August 28, 1-2 PM at <https://pugetsound-edu.zoom.us/j/2984647858?pwd=enpFUXlWbTBodkNFYThWS0w4eUZhQT09>

Best,

Julie Christoph, Associate Dean

Peggy Perno, Director of Student Accessibility and Accommodations

Benjamin Tromly, Chair of SAA Faculty Advisory Board

#### **Appendix IV: Slides used during presentation at Faculty Meeting (spring 2021)**

See:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1t9iNH0sKSFdS3e6Labpgy739zL395ZK3/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=109401402325651917932&rtpof=true&sd=true>

#### **Appendix V: Message on Note-Taking Accommodation (fall 2021)**

Greetings Faculty,

We are writing as members of the Student Accessibility and Accommodation Faculty Advisory Board regarding the note-taking accommodation. We appreciate the challenges this accommodation has posed for faculty. Human Resources and the Office of Student Accessibility and Accommodation have already communicated that note-taking as a student job is no longer effective or feasible, and that alternatives must be developed. In consultation with OSAA we have worked on developing some advice for how faculty can fulfill this accommodation and we are writing to share some approaches that our faculty have found to be successful in meeting this requirement.

Some of these strategies are more appropriate to some disciplines and class formats than others. Please note that we are concentrating on situations in which technological solutions (such as recording lectures) are not appropriate accommodations because of the nature of the disability. Here is a list of strategies that have been suggested as potential ways to meet the note taking accommodation in your classes, including a new option (#6) introduced by SAA after consultation with the Faculty Senate:

1. Students in the class rotate note-taking responsibilities on a schedule, with each person taking a turn. Notes could be posted in a Google Drive by students directly or posted in Canvas by faculty members after review;
2. Students collectively contribute to notes during class time in a collective space, whether electronic (such as GoogleDoc or Jamboard) or on paper, which is then posted on the course Canvas page;

3. Students are provided with class notes from the instructor;
4. The instructor asks for one or more volunteers and emails their names to SAA, which then contacts the volunteer(s) and shows them how to upload notes to the student's Accommodate account. If the volunteer is no longer able to take notes, faculty can find another volunteer or use one of the above options.
5. If faculty take fairly detailed class notes on the White Board, then students or faculty can take a picture of the board and post it on Canvas.

You can read about these different strategies in more detail at

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/129-hXsKluLAdM-MubtJjlcV79rrE7Z/view?usp=sharing>

6. If the instructor is not comfortable collecting the names of volunteers, they can make the following announcement to the class:

“There are one or more students in our class who are unable to take their notes because of a disability. I need your help to make our class accessible to everyone. SAA will be sending you an email asking for volunteers. This is very important, and I am hoping that you will respond as soon as possible.”

The instructor then notifies SAA ([saa@pugetsound.edu](mailto:saa@pugetsound.edu)) to send out the recruiting email. If SAA has not received a response after one week, SAA will notify the instructor, who will then choose another option.

We also believe that there are additional strategies that might be successful, and we hope you will reach out to us or to Peggy Perno with your ideas.

Student Accessibility and Accommodations Faculty Advisory Board

Francoise Belot, James Bernhard, Margot Casson, Tanya Erzen, Zaixin Hong, Eric Orlin, Courtney Thatcher, Benjamin Tromly-chair, Mike Valentine, Sheryl Zylstra. Ex-officio: Julie Christoph, Peggy Perno

### **Appendix VI: Notes from Ben Tromly on a meeting with representative of the Disabled Students Union, Feb. 2022 (these notes were sent in preparation for our meeting with DSU representatives at a meeting of SAA FAB)**

As preparation, I think we can all just refer to the notes I took on my preliminary meeting with DSU representatives last week. This might help us to generate questions for them and ideas for fruitful collaboration or work going forward:

Not surprising to me: there are professors who don't follow or care about accommodations, to the extent that students with disabilities tell each other “avoid prof X or Y”; also a general perception that many faculty perceive accommodations as a burden.

- The idea was expressed that the process of asking for accommodations each semester was perceived as a burden for students, both in terms of how busy students are and the sense that it seems unfair to be asking professors over and over again for accommodations. They asked why we can't have a yearly decision letter rather than a semester decision letter (not sure how this would work given the semester system!)

- On note-taking: they expressed the idea that there should be a universal system for all classes. I gave some background to them about faculty issues we have had with this accommodation, and they seemed to appreciate the value of the “menu” system given this;

- On late submission assignment; there was a sense that some professors expect students to be told before an assignment is due whether they will be exercising the accommodation (ie. that

the assignment will be late). They said that this put a lot of burden on students who are seeking help;

- There is no accountability for faculty who ignore accommodations or don't take them seriously;
- There should be training in disability matters so that profs won't do "red flags"; ex. one prof called disabilities "difficulties" on a syllabus. On this I explained that we are working on this but that faculty, especially those most needing to be reached, don't always show up and that it's hard to mandate these trainings.
- They wish the university had some mechanism for providing testing for students, especially on neurodiversity. They said that some students can't afford testing. They raised the idea of having a scholarship to facilitate testing for students. I thought that was a good idea—could we try to fundraise for that? I did mention that Peggy does try to give accommodations that students need whenever possible.
- The idea was expressed that it can seem unfair and intimidating that the granting of accommodations relies on the judgment of one person.