

# Tools for Recording Lecture

## Recording Lectures

Individuals that record class lectures typically use recordings to re-listen to the content to complete any missed information in their notes or to review important portions of lectures again. The key to using recording devices efficiently is the ability to quickly jump to the portion of the recording that you need to access. There are a variety of recording devices which range in cost due to memory size and a variety of other features. Lectures may be recorded with digital voice recorders, smart phones, smartpens, computers and/or tablets. Below is a description of these types of recording devices. ***Please contact your Accommodations Counselor if you would like a live demonstration of the following recording technologies.***

## Digital Voice Recorders

Pure audio recording devices such as digital voice recorders or smartphone recorders typically have a time stamp. It is helpful to occasionally mark your current time stamp on your written notes. This simple step helps you to know which portion of your audio recording corresponds to your written notes and allows you to more easily jump to portions of the recording that you would like to hear.

Important features to consider when purchasing a digital voice recorder:

- Storage size ("up to # hours" advertises the time when recording at the lowest quality)
- Ability to record in a portable format (mp3, wav)
- Ability to save the recorded files to a computer (USB connection and/or SD cards)

## Recommended models and Features

- Olympus (\$29.99 – \$299.00) (Available at many stores and online.)
  - Many different levels of models with ranges of features.
  - Suggested models:
    - WS-600S: Built in USB connection, built in file storage system, thin, short battery life
    - DS-61, DS-30, or DS-40: Mini USB cord included, average battery life, built in file storage system.
- Sony (\$34.00 – \$300.00) (Available at many stores and online.)
  - Many different levels of models with ranges of features similar to Olympus.
- Victor Stream (\$359) ([www.humanware.com](http://www.humanware.com))
  - SD card slot and mini USB cord port for copying and transferring files.
  - Designed for use by the visually impaired with voiced menus and text-to-speech tools.
- Zoom H1 Handy Recorder (\$90-150) (Available at Amazon.com)
  - Records in MP3 or WAV
  - USB connection available

## Smart phones

Most smart phones include a basic recording program that functions as a digital voice recorder. Microphone quality and file formats can vary by device.

## Recording Agreements

Instructors may have concerns when students record their lectures. Some instructors may only allow recording when it is listed as an approved accommodation need or request the student to sign an agreement. Instructors have the right to request the student to sign an agreement that clarifies that the recording is only for the student's personal use (will not be shared) and that the recordings will be destroyed at the end of the course. A sample recording agreement is available on the DS website (<http://disability.tamu.edu/forms>).

## Livescribe Smartpens ([www.livescribe.com](http://www.livescribe.com))

Livescribe brand smartpens have come to be the industry standard for smartpen technology. These pens, with the special 'Dot Paper,' allow users to take notes and record audio simultaneously. When the user is ready they can simply touch the pen to the word or graphic on the Dot Paper and play audio from the moment in time that the word or graphic was written. The pen also gives the option of uploading the notes onto computers so that the user's notes are available in a digital format, without having to scan or retype the notes. When the notes are uploaded, the audio is uploaded with them so that the user still has the ability to access audio by clicking on the specific note they need to hear.

- 1 GB equals about 100hrs of recording time (file size depends on recording settings)
- Required accessories:
  - Dot Paper – Notebooks range in price; start at \$8.95; a 4-pack of one-subject \$24.95
  - Ink Cartridges – Available in Black, Blue, Red; 5-pack – 6.95
- Compatible with Windows and Mac.
- Video demonstrations available at the livescribe website. You may also find videos/reviews on YouTube.

## Smartpen Models

- Sky (3<sup>rd</sup> Generation Smartpen; wirelessly streams notes to Evernote) -
  - **2GB: New** \$169.95; **4GB: New** \$199.95; **8GB: New** \$249.95
- Echo (2<sup>nd</sup> Generation Smartpen) -
  - **2GB: New** \$ 119.95; **Refurbished** \$69.95; **4GB: Refurbished** \$79.95; **8GB: Refurbished** \$99.95;
- Pulse (1<sup>st</sup> Generation Smartpen; found at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)) -
  - **2GB: New** – from \$85.00; **Used** – from \$50.00; **4GB: New** – from \$149.99; **Used** – from \$89.99; **Refurbished** – from \$130.00
- Available at locally **Best Buy** (Sky 2GB); **MSC Bookstore**(Accessories Only)
- Check the Livescribe website to find other online retailers (Best Buy, Target, Walmart, Amazon, etc.)

## Microsoft Notetaking Software

Microsoft Office offers highly rated software for Windows and Mac that may increase notetaking efficiency. Many people use this Microsoft software to take and keep organized notes. These programs make it easy for users to import information from other sources such as PowerPoint. Another hallmark of these programs is the ability to record audio while simultaneously taking notes. This feature allows users to go back and listen to audio related to specific notes in an instant which makes reviewing notes much more efficient.

- Users should consider buying an external microphone for recording lecture (this increases audio quality and cuts down background noise of clicking keys).
- Continue bringing paper and pen to class for drawing quick charts/graphs (It is possible to draw directly into your notes with the mouse).
- **(Windows) Microsoft OneNote** ([office.microsoft.com/en-us/onenote](http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/onenote)):
  - Available with all current Windows Microsoft Office Suites. (Discounted versions available to enrolled students through [software.tamu.edu](http://software.tamu.edu))
- **(Mac) Microsoft Word for Mac** ([www.microsoft.com/mac/word](http://www.microsoft.com/mac/word)):
  - Access by switching to "Notebook Layout" in Word for Mac
  - Available with all current Mac Microsoft Office Suites. (Discounted versions available to enrolled students through [software.tamu.edu](http://software.tamu.edu))

## Tablet Applications

More and more people are using tablets to take notes during lectures and meetings. There are a variety of applications, free and paid, available through the different app stores (iOS, Android, Windows). The notetaking apps are commonly found in the 'Productivity' category offer several different features. These apps typically provide a way to save notes into the cloud (online) for easy access from any internet connection. The apps frequently have some method of recording audio while simultaneously taking notes as well.