



Academic Accommodations
Students who are Deaf or
Hard of Hearing

Typical Accommodations

- preferential seating
- sign language interpreter
- captioned films and videotapes
- note takers
- lecture outlines / notes
- speech-to-text transcription
- assistive listening device

Services for Students with Disabilities

- student must self disclose
- student must provide documentation
- academic accommodation plan is created
- student must present and discuss plan with each instructor
- new accommodation plans are required every semester
- instructors should not provide accommodations without a current plan

Reasonable Accommodations

- an adjustment that allows equal participation in and benefit from all educational programs and activities
- minimize the impact of the student's disability to the greatest extent possible
- do not lower academic standards, alter the fundamental nature of a course or program, or affect course or college attendance policy

Otherwise qualified

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- students who meet the technical and academic qualifications for entry into the college or program are considered otherwise qualified
- no otherwise qualified individual shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in or denied the benefits a higher education

Pre-lingual Deaf

- pre-lingual deaf students are physically incapable of hearing spoken English
- linguistic problems arise: writing may include mistakes with sentence structure, verb tenses, and misuse of prepositions
- may not understand idiomatic expressions, innuendo, subtlety and inferences
- may consider English their second language.

Post-lingual Deaf

- post-lingual deaf students have had the advantage of hearing spoken English
- hearing loss occurred later in life, either suddenly or gradually, caused by sickness or an accident
- may have a stronger command of the English language and prefer real-time transcription (speech-to-text) as an accommodation

Non-verbal Communication

- between 93-95% of communication is non-verbal
- deaf and hard of hearing rely heavily on physical touch and visual cues
- do accentuate (not exaggerate) your facial expression, body language, and gestures
- reinforce course material with visual aids

Logistical Aspects

- needs clear sight-line to the instructor, interpreter or speech-to-text monitor, and visual aids
- may rely on lip-reading and para-linguistics, such as situational clues, body language and facial expressions
- avoid standing in front of a window or light source
- avoid speaking while walking the room or while your back to the class

Sign Language Interpreters

- receive specialized training, follow a *code of professional conduct, and hold state or national certification
- are professionals with insightful ways to facilitate communication
- follow the intent of all speakers, hearing and deaf
- interpret environmental sounds as well as side conversations

Primary Code of Ethics

- keep all assignment-related information strictly confidential
- render the message faithfully, always conveying the content and spirit of the speaker
- do not counsel, advise, or interject personal opinions

Helpful hints

- introduce the interpreter to the class, but do not draw unnecessary attention
- avoid speaking in the third person; address the student directly
- be cognitive of lag time during demonstrations or visual aids
- regulate cross-talking or over-lapping during class discussions
- provide interpreter with syllabus and course related material in advance

Speech-to-Text Technology

- TypeWell is a sophisticated software system used primarily in educational institutions
- transcriptionist and student each use a wireless laptop computer
- transcriptionist receives specialized training, follows a code of ethics, and transcribes the intent of all speakers
- transcripts may be edited and provided to the student as study notes
- transcripts are the property of SSWD office

Helpful hints

- provide syllabus and related course material, particularly specialized vocabulary, to transcriptionist prior to the beginning of class
- compensate for lag time by allowing adequate response time
- regulate cross-talking and repeat questions or comments from students whose voices do not project

Assistive Listening Devices

- instructors wear FM microphone and students have the receiver
- avoid using a tape recorded lesson, or provide the student with a transcript
- FM microphones should be positioned near the auditory source, ie. TV
- be cognitive of acoustical problems: busy hallways or noisy ventilation



Helpful hints

- hearing aids may be effective in quiet environments, but not in a classroom
- severity of a student's hearing loss could be different at various frequencies
- ability to hear different voices will vary depending on pitch of voice
- ability to hear a voice is different than the ability to discriminate environmental sounds

Policies 04:07:00

- intended to give students appropriate and legally mandated support to work toward a higher education
- to provide legal protection for the faculty member or instructor
- bypassing SSWD is a mistake that could have serious consequences for the student, faculty member, and institution

Waiting for the World to Change

- Deaf Performing Artists Network, D-PAN
- John Mayer's *Waiting for the World to Change*
- http://www.d-pan.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=35&Itemid=35

SSWD contacts

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