

## Tips for Working with Deaf/Hard of Hearing Students (DHH) and Sign Language Interpreters

1. The **interpreter** is there to facilitate communication between the deaf student, you, and the hearing students. The goal of the interpretation is **message equivalence**. The interpreter is not interjecting his/her own opinions into the interpretation. If the instructor leaves the room, **the interpreter is not in charge and will not report cheating**.
2. The **interpreter** usually **sits at the front of the classroom near the instructor**. This allows the student to look from the interpreter to the instructor with ease. At times the interpreter needs to reference something that you have written on the board, an overhead or a Power Point slide that is on the opposite side of the room. Therefore, the interpreter may have to stand up, walk over and point to what you have written or displayed. If the class is more interactive where students are moving around, then the interpreter may choose to stand and move to be next to the person who is speaking.
3. **Questions** for the DHH student should be asked **directly to the deaf student** using second person speech, rather than be directed to the interpreter.
4. **Interpreting** causes a **slight delay of information** which is a reason for the delayed response from the student.
5. **Good lighting** is essential. When darkening the room, please try to arrange enough light to interpret by.
6. The DHH student may also require a **notetaker** since it is very difficult for the student to take notes and look at the interpreter at the same time. If you can recommend someone in your class, please have that student sign up by going to "**MySOU**" then click on the "**Academic Support**" tab. In the **Disability Resources** channel they will find the link to "**\$50 and Priority Registration? Apply to be a notetaker.**" Click on that and it will lead the student to the **AIMS** page to sign up. Remember...the student will earn a \$50 voucher for the bookstore and be eligible for priority registration for the next term!
7. Students are responsible for arranging their own tutors. The **interpreter is not** there to **tutor** the student.
8. In the rare instance when the **interpreter is absent** and I am not able to find a substitute, try to write key words on the board without compromising your teaching style. Every effort will be made to provide accessibility.
9. When possible, **interpreters work in teams** because of the mental and physical rigors of the job. Sometimes an interpreter may show-up to your class after you have already begun teaching. This is either to team with the interpreter assigned to your class or for observation purposes.

10. Interpreters follow the **"Code of Professional Conduct"** as outlined by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and the National Association of the Deaf (NAD). *I have attached this information at the end of this document.*
- 11 **Visual aids are a deaf student's best friend!** Using PowerPoint during class and posting them on Moodle is a wonderful tool, along with overheads, writing key concepts/names on the board during instruction, and pointing.
12. **IN ORDER TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS, PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOUR NEW AND/OR USED VIDEOS AND DVD'S ARE CAPTIONED! PLEASE INCLUDE YOUTUBE AND OTHER STREAMING MEDIA!**  
I understand that this is not always possible...especially with old videos you may have copied from a TV show or web-based videos you may use from YouTube or other internet sites. For videos that are not captioned, please contact Wink Harner, our Assistive Technology Specialist at [harnerv@sou.edu](mailto:harnerv@sou.edu). The sooner you get them to her, the sooner you will have them back ready to go. For web-based media, often there are transcripts attached, so if you can display that at the same time, the DHH student will be able to read the transcript under the video. It would also be most helpful if the student and interpreters were able to get a hard copy of the transcript beforehand. Please note that interpreting media is different than interpreting lecture and discussion in the class because it is difficult for the student to watch the interpreter and the video at the same time and be able to catch all of the nuances. FYI...most DVDs today are captioned or have subtitles. ***Did you know that captioning can benefit the entire class...especially for the spelling of names and concepts?***

## Tools for Successful Interpreting

- Please include the interpreter when making **copies of handouts** for the students, e.g. syllabi, articles.
- Please include the interpreter when making **copies of the test on the test day** and when returning the tests for discussion and review. They will return it when the discussion is over.
- Include the interpreter's email in your roster for **access to Moodle or other website** information. Interpreters prepare for the class, so being abreast of assignments, Power Points, and discussion threads will make sure that the interpreting process is successful.
- If you happen to have an extra **textbook** for the interpreters to borrow during the term, that would be most helpful for their preparation. Even if it isn't the most recent edition; but if it has the same information, concepts, terms that the students are required to know, it will help them to prep for the class. Usually the publishers are willing to send another desk copy when they understand it's for access reasons (e.g. Interpreters). Otherwise, our department will have to purchase a textbook at the Bookstore which can be quite costly during these challenging economic times. The interpreters will return all materials at the end of the term.

**THANK YOU FOR....**

***"Working collaboratively as Advocates for Student Success"***

If you have any questions, you can contact me at [sachsi@sou.edu](mailto:sachsi@sou.edu) or ext 2-6811

## **RID/NAD Code of Professional Conduct**

*A code of professional conduct is a necessary component to any profession to maintain standards for the individuals within that profession to adhere. It brings about accountability, responsibility and trust to the individuals that the profession serves.*

RID (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf) along with the NAD (National Association of the Deaf), co-authored the ethical code of conduct for interpreters. Both organizations uphold high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct for interpreters. At the core of this code of conduct are the seven tenets, which are followed by guiding principles and illustrations.

The tenets are to be viewed holistically and as a guide to complete professional behavior. When in doubt, one should refer to the explicit language of the tenet.

### **TENETS:**

- 1. Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.**
- 2. Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.**
- 3. Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.**
- 4. Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.**
- 5. Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns and students of the profession.**
- 6. Interpreters maintain ethical business practice.**
- 7. Interpreters engage in professional development.**

Full version of the Code of Professional Conduct: [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)