



Supporting Students with Hearing Impairments

Deaf or hard of hearing students vary in their communication skills. A deaf student may use a number of communication modes.

Sign Language Interpreter

The Interpreter's Role:

The interpreter has a single responsibility in your class: to facilitate communication between you and your deaf student(s)/hard of hearing student(s) and between the deaf student(s)/hard of hearing student(s) and classmates.

An interpreter will:

- Interpret accurately
- Remain impartial
- Interpret all the communication that occurs in the presence of the deaf student
- Maintain confidentiality
- Avoid counseling or advising deaf students
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Suggestions for Instructors to Help the Interpreting Process:

- Keep the visual line of communication between the interpreter and student open by avoiding walking between them.
- The interpreter, interprets exactly what you say.
- Speak at your normal rate of speech.
- Don't ask the interpreter to stop signing.
- Be sensitive to the fact that when the lights are completely off in a classroom, the student cannot see the interpreter.
- Textbooks, class syllabus, handouts and lecture notes help the interpreter become familiar with the topics and to spell key vocabulary words. If possible, please give the interpreter(s) a copy of each of these items.
- Select films that already have closed captioning. For the deaf and hard of hearing students, captioning is easier to watch (read) than watching the interpreter.
- Build in breaks when classes exceed 50 minutes.
- Plan for the interpreter to sit or stand near the person who will be speaking the most.

- When addressing the Deaf or hard of hearing student, look and speak directly to him/her instead of the Interpreter. Avoid saying, “Tell him/her...” or “Ask him/her”
- Be aware that the interpreter is trying hard to interpret the lecture with accuracy. If the speed of the lecture or conversation becomes too rapid, the interpreter may ask for clarification.

Use of Technology and Media in the Classroom

When real-time captioning is the preferred form of communication, the services of a real time captioner (RTC) may be arranged for the student. This comes as a reasonable and useful classroom accommodation to help the student learn and understand course content. Therefore, it is important for both students who are deaf or hard of hearing and instructors who teach these students, to know how to utilize the services of a captioner effectively.

A Real-Time Captioner (RTC) is a stenographer (similar to those used in court), who uses a steno-machine to provide a record of the lecture and classroom discussion. The role of a captioner in the classroom is to facilitate communication for the student. The captioner is either on site or working from a remote location. The words of the lecture are instantaneously readable on the screen of a laptop for the student. The student reads the typed record while the instructor is lecturing. An edited transcript of the lecture will be provided to the student afterwards. Typically, captioners sit at the front of the class where there is a convenient electrical outlet and where the student is able to see both the professor and the screen; however with the advancement of technology, more captioners are now using wireless devices.

Establish Captioners Location: The captioner and student will discuss where the captioner should be located in the classroom to provide the greatest benefit for the student and minimal distraction to other class members.

Consider Classroom Arrangement: For interactive situations, circles or semicircles work best for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

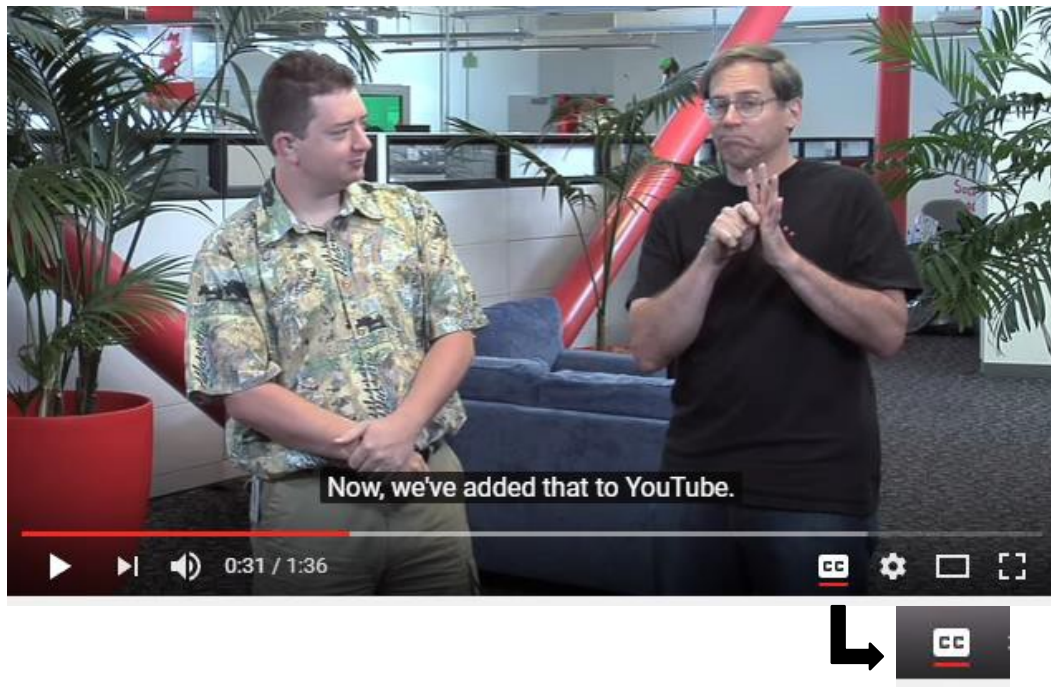
Share Lecture Content: Familiarity with the subject matter will enhance the quality of the captioned message. If possible, share outlines, texts, agenda, technical vocabulary, class syllabus and any other background information that would be pertinent to the captioner.

Use of Videos

Captioned DVD’s or videos are REQUIRED to allow the student direct visual access to the information. If you need assistance with this, please contact the Faculty Resource Center well in advance of the planned showing of the video.

- Be proactive and use captioned videos only.

- **Closed Captioning (CC)** and subtitling are both processes of displaying text on a television, video screen, or other visual display to provide additional or interpretive information.



- Ask the Learning Resource Center if the videos you are checking out are captioned.
 - [Search for captioned videos on YouTube](#)
- If you are creating your own videos, work with the *Faculty Resource Center* to find out the process to be captioned.
- If you upload your own self-created videos into You Tube, ensure the captions are in sync with the spoken words in the video. You may have to go in and edit the text. The [Faculty Resource Center](#) can show you how.