

NOTE: The following tips were compiled by the Learning Needs & Evaluation Center (LNEC). Those with additional questions regarding deaf/hard of hearing students or students with disabilities in a class and those interested in other resources related to persons with disabilities should contact the Learning Needs and Evaluation Center/Disability Services Office at 243-5180, LNEC@virginia.edu, or visit their website at <http://www.virginia.edu/studenthealth/lneec.html>.

All Deaf/HH students are different and require different accommodations based on their experience, degree of hearing loss, and preferred mode of communication. Some Deaf/HH students use hearing aids, some have cochlear implants, while others use neither; some know sign language, others do not; some can speak intelligibly, others cannot; etc.

Accommodations can range from the less obvious (preferential seating, note-taking assistance), to the noticeable (personal FM system consisting of a transmitter worn by the professor and a receiver/headphone unit worn by the student), to the highly visible (a sign language or oral interpreter, cued speech transliterator, Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription (CART) Reporter, closed-captioned videos) and any combination of these. Accommodations can even vary for the same student from one class to another. Note: Details about how different service providers work appear below.

The following are some basic tips for working with Deaf/HH students in your course. It is important to keep in mind that research and practical experience prove time and again that accommodations like those described below for Deaf/HH students (and most accommodations made for all students with disabilities) not only benefit the intended student(s), but *all* students.

BEFORE THE COURSE BEGINS

- As early as possible, you will receive an Accommodations Notice from LNEC informing you of a Deaf/HH student taking your class and explaining the approved accommodations for him/her.
- You may be asked to provide a list of video materials used in your class to assist LNEC in securing closed-captioned versions and determining whether the classroom is equipped to show closed-captioned materials. Videos, DVDs and other visual media are normally marked with a “CC” logo if closed-captioned.
- You may be asked to provide a syllabus, vocabulary list, or other course materials to assist interpreters in preparing for the course and/or to allow CART reporters to program their equipment.
- Take a moment to assess your classroom setup, materials, requirements, projects, and teaching style in light of all the suggestions given here. Also, consider the implications that field trips or special activities, like going outside on a nice day, may have for a student (e.g., CART reporters need an outlet and cannot move their equipment outdoors).
- Remember, the LNEC will work with you to help you accommodate a Deaf/HH student. In addition, LNEC can refer you to professors who have worked with Deaf/HH students in the past. Feel free to contact the LNEC if you have any questions or concerns.

IN CLASS

- You generally do not need to slow down or alter your speech pattern or vocabulary to accommodate a Deaf/HH student. The student or service provider will let you know if they need you to slow down. Depending on the student, you may need to minimize moving around the classroom.

- Don't exaggerate your mouth movements, speak louder than normal, or direct additional attention towards a Deaf/HH student. Do try to keep an eye out for expressions of frustration, confusion, and inattention in such students. Feel free to talk with the student outside of class if you sense any problems.
- Work with the student and his/her service provider to assure a proper seating arrangement that maintains the best sight lines and comfort, along with the least distractions.
- Please speak and ask questions directly to the Deaf/HH student; i.e., don't turn to the interpreter and say, "Ask her to do the next problem," or "Is he/she getting everything?" Even questions like, "Am I going too fast?" can be directed to the student. The student can then consult the service provider.
- Because an overhead projector or screen projector (e.g., PowerPoint) allows you to face the students, it is preferable to a black or white board. If you use a blackboard, finish writing before turning to the class to discuss the material rather than speaking while writing and facing away from class.
- It is helpful for the Deaf/HH student and his/her service provider if you write out key names and terms to be discussed that day on the board, overhead, or in a handout because the service provider will be finger spelling or keying these terms. This is especially important for difficult-to-spell words.
- Because it is difficult to write while someone is interpreting or cueing for you, it is helpful to write on the board any important reminders, assignments, due dates, schedule changes, etc.
- Try not to ask students to fill out forms or sign attendance sheets while you are lecturing. Consider using a class list that can be quickly marked or discretely start a sign-in sheet with the Deaf/HH student. Start lecturing when he/she is done.
- Because Deaf/HH students cannot watch an interpreter, cue or transcription while reading, give students a few moments to read handouts before discussing the material on them, (i.e., try to avoid saying, "As you look this over, let me mention...").
- Announce when and from what source you will read something verbatim and allow students to find and reference it, e.g., "A good example is at the bottom of page 48 [pause]...the paragraph beginning..." It's generally easier for the Deaf/HH student to read directly from the source.
- Before answering students' questions, repeat, restate, or rephrase them, especially if an FM system is being used; the system amplifies only the professor's voice. If the question comes from the back of the room, the student and/or service provider might not have heard it completely.
- During group discussions, ask students to speak one at a time and acknowledge/identify them or have them acknowledge/identify themselves before they comment. Asking students to raise hands before being called on tends to promote fairer participation for Deaf/HH students than allowing students just to start speaking.
- Keep in mind the slight lag time involved in interpreting, transliterating, and reporting when you prompt the class for any type of response; wait just a few seconds longer for responses than you normally might.
- Try to avoid large podiums, microphones or other materials that obscure or block your face and mouth since many Deaf/HH students use facial and lip-reading cues to follow what is being said (even when using a sign language interpreter).
- Understand that most Deaf/HH students will be using LNEC's peer note-taking program since it's difficult to read lips or focus on the service provider and take notes at the same time. Assistance with securing note takers and addressing any problems that may arise is greatly appreciated. If you have additional suggestions or alternatives for securing good class notes, please let LNEC know.
- Understand that focusing intently on an interpreter, cue, or the screen of a reporter for up to an hour or more is extremely fatiguing. Like other students, Deaf/HH students may "zone out" or even doze off during class and generally the service provider will keep on going. If the student must leave class for a moment, the service provider will stop for that time. If a student fails to

show up for class, service providers are instructed to wait for 10 to 15 minutes before leaving as discretely as possible. Although LNEC has attendance policies for Deaf/HH who use service providers, Deaf/HH students are equally subject to your attendance/absence policies as anyone else.

- There's generally no problem with acknowledging that the service provider is there, making a joke when you think something particularly difficult to interpret or key was said, etc. If you want to involve the service provider/interpreter's perspective, just ask the Deaf/HH student if you may. He/she will generally not have a problem with it, but respect his/her decision regardless.

TEST-TAKING, ASSESSMENTS, GRADING, EVALUATIONS

- Please be sure that instructions/directions are written on exams. Because the service provider will often not stay around during an exam period, write important information (e.g., time remaining, corrections, additional instructions, etc.) on the board or overhead.
- You should grade Deaf/HH students the same as any other students and hold them to the same standard. Assignments/requirements that need to be modified due to the student's disability should involve the same amount of work and degree of academic rigor as the original assignment. "But, I spelled that wrong on the exam because my interpreter did" is not an acceptable excuse if the student would have also seen the terminology elsewhere.

TYPES OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

Sign Language Interpreters interpret in sign language what is being said in class. Interpretation may range from signed English to American Sign Language. For longer classes, you may have two interpreters who switch off every 20-30 minutes to combat fatigue. Generally, it is best for sign language interpreters to situate themselves as close to the speaker (i.e., professor) as possible with the student generally in the front row.

Oral Interpreters present what is being said in class on their lips (i.e., mouthing), possibly substituting similar words that are more easily distinguishable on the lips. It is generally best for oral interpreters to be situated as close as possible to the student. The student doesn't necessarily have to sit in front, but that's usually best.

Cued Speech Translitterators present what is being said in class in a system that combines oral interpreting and a system of hand signals that help distinguish between sounds that look the same on the lips (i.e., an enhanced lip reading system). It is generally best for translitterator to be close to the student, but being close to the speaker is important as well.

Computer-Assisted Realtime Transcription (CART) Reporters use a stenography machine and laptop computer(s) to key in all that is being said in class so that it appears in written form on the screen of the laptop placed in front of the student. CART Reporters need access to an electrical outlet. It is generally best if the reporter is close to the student, but also important that they are close to the speaker.

C-Print/TypeWell Transcription/Computer-Assisted Notetaking System Reporters work similarly to CART reporters, but they utilize a regular keyboard/laptop computer with specialized software to input what is being said in class, which is transmitted to the screen of another laptop placed in front of the student. More editing and discretion are involved here than with CART.

Note: Be aware that, depending on the Deaf/HH student's speech abilities, they may depend on the service provider to be their "voice;" i.e., the student will sign, cue or even type their response, question, comment, etc. and the service provider will voice it for them.