

To: Instructors Providing Accommodations for Students who **Require Sign Language Interpreter/s**

This semester, you have received an official letter of accommodation from Student Disability Services (SDS) that outlines the accommodation of **“A sign language interpreter, provided by Student Disability Services, will be present in the classroom”** in order to facilitate communication and participation in your class.

An **American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter** facilitates communication in the classroom for the Instructor, the student, and other students in the classroom. The interpreter receptively sees the ASL and translates that message into English as well as listens to the spoken message and translates that message into ASL following its own grammatical structure. There are no tenses in ASL instead, time is used to show past, present and future.

SDS also recommends that you follow these established guidelines for working with **Sign Language Interpreters** in the classroom.

- 1) It is important to face the student and speak directly to the student not to the interpreter.
- 2) Providing the Interpreter with course syllabus, handouts, outlines, readings, videos, vocabulary, etc. helps the Interpreters prepare accurate and clear interpretation. Allowing them access to Blackboard Learn is helpful also.
- 3) The Interpreter will arrive at least five minutes before each class begins and be as unobtrusive as possible.
- 4) There will be one interpreter or if necessary, an interpreter team (two interpreters) may be provided in order to reduce Repetitive Stress Injury.
- 5) In the event of an Interpreter cannot be provided, a recorder may be placed in your classroom so this material can be provided to the student in an accessible format.
- 6) The Interpreters are in the classroom to facilitate all communication not to participate in discussions, offer opinions, act as tutors, note takers or monitors during testing.
- 7) The Interpreter will sit or stand near the front of the room and may need to stand beside the overhead or screen which allows for the student’s need to see the interpreter and the Power Points or Videos at the same time. Lighting is important for the student to see the interpreter.
- 8) The interpretation is usually one to five seconds behind the speaker. Allow response time for the student so that all have an opportunity to participate.
- 9) Restating or summarize student’s comments if they are difficult to hear, understand, or somewhat disorganized provides opportunity for clear communication.
- 10) Check the closed caption on films or videos before showing. If there are no closed captions, please try to find a film or video that have accurate captions.

SDS encourages you to pursue additional information located on our website at [www.utsa.edu/disability](http://www.utsa.edu/disability) in the Faculty Guide section.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter and feel free to call our office at 210-458-4157 should you have further questions.