

To: Instructors Providing Accommodations for Students who require a **Captionist**

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

A **Captionist** facilitates all communication in the classroom for the Instructor, the student, and other students in the classroom. The **Captionist** uses a laptop with specialized software to transcribe spoken English into text for the student to read on the screen in real time. The transcribed text closely represents all important content in the classroom however, it is not verbatim. The student will provide a flash drive in order for the transcript to be saved and given back to the student. This information is only used by the student with this accommodation and is not given out to any other students.

SDS also recommends that you follow these established guidelines for working with **Captionists** in the classroom:

- 1) It is important to face the student and speak directly to the student not to the Captionist.
- 2) Provide the Captionist with the course syllabus, handouts, outlines, readings, videos, vocabulary, etc. which helps them prepare accurate and clear transcripts by creating a glossary for the terminology specific to the class. Allowing them access to Blackboard Learn is helpful also.
- 3) The Captionist will arrive at least five minutes before each class begins and be as unobtrusive as possible.
- 4) There will be one Captionist or if necessary, a team (two Captionists) may be provided in order to reduce Repetitive Stress Injury.
- 5) In the event a Captionist 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 Captionist/s are in the classroom to facilitate all communication, not to participate in discussions, offer opinions, act as tutors, note takers or proctors during testing.
- 7) The Captionist will sit in a location that allows them to hear the instructor and other students in the class. A desk or table may need to be used in order to allow for maximized typing and blinds closed to reduce glare.
- 8) The Captionist 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 has accurate captions.

SDS encourages you to pursue additional information located on our website at 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.