



Instructor Fact Sheet: Teaching Students with Hearing Loss

Need for Classroom Accommodations

Students that are deaf or have hearing loss usually require some type of classroom accommodations and/or modifications. Though the student may learn in different ways, this does not imply an inferior capacity to learn. These accommodations and/or modifications may simply be in the way information is presented. Employing some of the suggested techniques and strategies may actually benefit all students through what has been referred to in the educational arena as universal design.

This handout is intended to offer the instructor teaching tips for students that are deaf or have hearing loss. It is important to remember these students often have to face stigmas and are sometimes reluctant to make special requests. Therefore it is imperative for the instructor to be sensitive and responsive to the student's requests, so that he or she can fully participate in the educational experience.

Access to Classroom Information

Students that have hearing loss often utilize several expressive and receptive methods of communication both natural and technological. Speechreading is often used, however it is reliable for only about 30% of spoken English. Therefore a variety of methods are often utilized that include: hearing aids, assistive listening devices (ALD), sign language interpreters, audio recording, notetakers, captioning, and transcription. In addition to the above, there are a number of ways in which an instructor may assist the student in having access to classroom information.

Tips for Instructors

A. Use *Good Communication Techniques*

- Repeat or rephrase questions or comments from the class before responding.
- Point out who is asking a question or making a comment.
- Face the class and speak naturally at a moderate pace.
- Avoid the temptation to pick up the pace when time is short.
- Do not speak while writing on the wallboard.
- Lecture from the front of the room and avoid pacing around.
- Do not drink or chew while lecturing.
- Do not stand or sit in front of a window where shadows will impede speechreading.
- Beards and mustaches can make speechreading more difficult, keep them trimmed.
- Use facial expressions, body language, gestures, etc. when appropriate (don't exaggerate). This will help in emphasizing a point where as voice fluctuations may not be interpreted.
- If a sign interpreter is being used in the classroom, speak & look at the student and not the interpreter.

B. *Providing Classroom Services*

- Assist in the designation of a qualified Notetaker. Further handouts explaining this process will be provided to you by the student.
- Provide copies of your class notes if available.

- Provide printed copies of overhead or PowerPoint presentations.
- If available, provide any visual aids that may assist in learning.
- Provide handouts such as syllabus, lesson plans, and assignments.
- Write special announcements, assignments, etc. on the wallboard.
- Allow additional time for recording any information placed on wallboard before erasing.
- Write down technical vocabulary, foreign terms, formulas, etc. on the wallboard or provide a handout.
- Use captioned films/videos or provide a written transcript.
- Help find seating near the front if requested by the student. May be necessary for speechreading and recording.
- Arrange for written tests in place of oral tests.
- Know how to wear an assistive listening device if requested.
- Know how to wear a digital voice recording device.
- Keep classroom door closed to eliminate outside distractions & amplification of background noises.
- If practical, modify classroom seating in a circular pattern. This will allow the student to observe & interact with classmates.

C. Instructor Office Hour Services

- Discuss concerns about the student's ability to hear privately and not in front of the class.
- Encourage feedback from the student about your teaching style.
- If requested by student, review quizzes and exams with student for any patterns relating to missed or misunderstood information.

D. Additional Services

- Periodically review Notetaker's notes for accuracy, content and neatness.
- Collaborate with a campus Disability Resource Center coordinator in matters of concern or if you have specific questions.
- Provide testing accommodations if indicated on the student's accommodation letter to you.

In Conclusion

It is important to understand that the student with a hearing loss has a responsibility to his/her own academic success. He/she must employ all the necessary skills and strategies of a good student in order to be successful. He/she should have good attendance, be punctual, complete assignments, participate in class activities, utilize instructor's office hours and be active in the learning process.

While the majority of the previously mentioned tips are commonly employed in the classroom or are common sense, it would be appreciated that you utilize any of the techniques new to you. This experience may more than likely prove to be rewarding to the student with the hearing loss, the entire class and you.

Thank you,

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