

Instructor Fact Sheet - Working with an Interpreter

- You will be communicating with the student who is deaf or hard of hearing through the interpreter. The interpreter will sign what is happening in the classroom. This includes the lecture; student discussion, comments, and questions; and environmental sounds inside and outside the classroom. No personal communication between the interpreter and the student will occur during the class period.
- The interpreter will adjust to your pace. If necessary, the interpreter will ask you to repeat information. This is to ensure that the deaf/hard of hearing student receives all of the information.
- Generally, the interpreter will stand either to your left or to your right. This enables the student to maintain eye contact with both you and the interpreter. Wherever the interpreter stands, there must be good lighting available.
- In using demonstrations and visual aids, it is important for you to allow extra time for the student to see what is being demonstrated and to see what is being signed.
- Avoid vague references as “this” and “that.”
- When using an overhead projector, slides, videotapes, and/or films, it may be necessary to dim the lighting in the classroom. Maintain enough lighting for the interpreter to be seen.
- If the student is not in attendance, the interpreter will remain for 15 minutes before leaving.
- Long stretches of interpreting may require a team of interpreters working together. They will take turns, rotating approximately every 20 minutes throughout the class period.
- If you wish to discuss any problems with the interpreter about the interpreting situation, please wait until a break or after class. Together, with the student, decide on solutions to the situation.
- Help the interpreter stay in his/her role. Avoid speaking directly to the interpreter or asking questions of him/her during the class period. The interpreter will not feel free to answer for himself/herself until after the class is over.
- If you would like to speak to the student after class and will need the assistance of the interpreter, ask the interpreter if she/he can stay for a few minutes. Do not assume that the interpreter is available, she/he may have another assignment immediately afterwards.

Please contact the Disability Resource Center at 352-392-8565 x200, if you have any questions.