Handbook For Students Using SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING Services

A Department in the Division of Student Engagement and Success
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SERVICES

Services Provided

• Disability Services (DS) will provide Sign Language Interpreters for all academic settings directly related to a class (i.e., class time, class assignments, or an instructor-generated review session), but not for such things as peer study groups. Discuss with the DS staff for clarification.

• DS can provide contact information for local, qualified interpreters or community agency for other nonacademic activities; however, payment is the responsibility of the department or organization sponsoring the event.

Requesting Services

• Students must register with DS each semester. At the time of the initial registration, the student will meet with DS staff in order to discuss the student’s communication mode(s). Arrangements for interpreter services will be made accordingly. In subsequent semesters, the student must first submit their request for accommodations, including the use of American Sign Language (ASL)/Sign Language Interpreter for Class Activities through Accessible Information Management (AIM).

• Students must give any necessary schedule/class information to the DS office at the earliest possible time.

• Students may be asked to plan class schedules that best utilize the interpreter resources available.

• Students needing interpreter services for activities outside of regularly scheduled class times (i.e., class-related review sessions, Supplemental Instruction (SI) sessions, etc.) must submit an Interpreting Services Request Form 48 business hours in advance of the activity. The DS office cannot guarantee interpreter services will be available if provided less than 48 (business) hours notice.
Facilitation of Services
Interpreter
- If a student has communication problems or other issues with the interpreter, these issues should be discussed initially with the interpreter. The DS office should also be informed of these concerns. Any such issues should not be discussed with any other interpreters or individuals who may use the interpreter for communication access. If the issues related to the interpreting cannot be resolved directly with the interpreter, the DS office should be notified in order to facilitate resolution of these concerns.

- Advanced notice is required for interpreter services. (See page 3, Requesting Services)

Note-taker
- If a problem with a note-taker arises, the student should first attempt to resolve the matter with the note-taker utilizing an interpreter for communication. If continued attempts of addressing the situation are unsuccessful, the student should seek the advice and assistance of the DS office.

Other Accommodations
- If a problem arises with lighting, preferential seating, obtaining a note-taker, or other issues, the student should address the concerns with the instructor through the use of an interpreter, unless another method of communication (e.g., email, video relay call) is preferred. If the conflict cannot be resolved, the student should contact the DS office.

Instructor
- If a student has a problem with an instructor, class, homework, or textbook, the student should request to meet with the instructor. An interpreter may be available for a student to meet with the instructor provided that a request is
submitted to the DS office. If the concern is not resolved, the student should contact the DS office for further assistance. (For additional information regarding grievance procedures, please review the DS Policies and Procedures.)

# ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL

## Absences
- Students are responsible for notifying DS in person, by phone, or email at disability.services@tamucc.edu when they will be absent for class or previously scheduled appointment; DS will notify the interpreter of the absence. It is not the interpreter’s responsibility to notify DS if the student also chooses to notify the interpreter.

- Repeated failure to notify DS of absences may result with the suspension of interpreting services. (See page 6, No-Shows)

- A student may choose not to attend class for a variety of reasons; as long as DS is notified prior to the start of class (with as much advanced notice as possible), interpreting services will not be affected. (Regular class attendance is highly encouraged by DS for academic success.)

## Tardiness
- Students should notify DS in person, by phone, or email at disability.services@tamucc.edu if they will be late for class or previously scheduled appointment.

- If DS does not receive notification of tardiness, the interpreter will wait in class or at the location of the previously scheduled appointment for 30 minutes. After this time, the interpreter will leave the assignment and report the student as a no-show to the DS office. The no-show will remain on the record even if the student arrives to class or the appointment after the interpreter has left.

- If the student arrives late, but before the interpreter leaves, it is not the interpreter’s responsibility to inform the student of missed class material. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the information missed prior to their arrival to class
from either the instructor, classmates, the syllabus, or other means, either following the class meeting or at another appropriate time.

No-Shows

- Students must inform DS in person, by phone, or email at disability.services@tamucc.edu when they will be absent from class or will not attend a previously scheduled appointment to avoid the accrual of no-shows. (See page 9, Responsibilities)

NO-SHOW

Any time a student misses a class or appointment, for which interpreting services have been scheduled, without informing DS in advance to cancel the services. This includes situations where a class is cancelled, but the DS/interpreter was not informed by the student.

- Students must inform DS in person, by phone, or email at disability.services@tamucc.edu when they will be late to class. Failure to notify DS of a tardy could result in a no-show, even if the student arrives to class after the interpreter has left.

- No-shows can be converted to absences for valid reasons. The reason should be discussed with DS staff to determine their validity.

- Interpreters are required to report all student absences from class and appointments to the DS office.

Interpreter Notification Procedure

- Students should follow the Attendance Protocol (see page 5) in order to avoid any disruption to services, where the student may report class cancellations, absences, and late arrivals to the DS office at any time either in person, by phone, or email. If the student so chooses, they may also make direct contact with the interpreter or interpreter agency; however, the student should also notify the DS office.

- By contacting the interpreter and/or DS office when anticipating a late arrival, the interpreter may increase the standard wait time by an additional 15 minutes.
No-Show Warning and Suspension of Services

- Upon notification that a student was a no-show, DS staff will add the occurrence to the student’s record of no-shows.

- Upon notification of the occurrence of a second no-show, DS staff will send a warning notice (via email to the student’s Islander email account). The notice will state that two no-shows have accrued, and suspension of services will commence upon the accrual of a third no-show. The student will be encouraged to meet with DS staff to clarify the recorded no-shows and discuss recommendation(s) and/or procedure(s) to avoid suspension of services.

- When a third no-show is recorded, DS staff will send notice to the student (via email) detailing the record of no-shows and the suspension of services. In the notice, DS staff will also request that the student contact the office to schedule a meeting to discuss reinstatement of services.

INTERPRETING PROTOCOL

NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct
Sign Language Interpreters at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC) are encouraged to follow the National Association of the Deaf (NAD)-Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Code of Professional Conduct (https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_HBAap35D1R1MwYk9hTUopc3M/view), issued by the RID to maintain the integrity of the interpreting profession and to protect themselves and the consumers they serve. A detailed description of the full NAD-RID code of Professional Conduct can be viewed on the website noted above. The seven basic tenets of the Code of Professional Conduct are as follows:

1. Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.
2. Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.
3. Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.
4. Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.
5. Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns, and students of the profession.
6. Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.
7. Interpreters engage in professional development.

Using a Sign Language Interpreter
- Introduce yourself and let the interpreter know your communication preference.
- Discuss appropriate seating location with the interpreter prior to class.
- Sit in a location that will allow you to see both the interpreter and the instructor. Try to do this before the first class begins.
- Discuss with the interpreter the signs that will be used for topic specific vocabulary.
- Establish a clarification process with the interpreter for missed information, softly spoken words, and multiple people speaking at once.
- If you do not understand the assigned interpreter for your class, address the situation as soon as possible.
- If you do not understand something that was said in class or feel that you have missed important class information, raise your hand and ask the instructor to repeat or explain the information. The interpreter is not the instructor and should not be expected to act as such.
- Do not interrupt the interpreter for things such as asking the time, starting a conversation, or complaining about the class. Remember, part of the interpreter’s task is to voice what you sign, so do not sign anything that you would not want the rest of the class to hear.
- When talking to a hearing person through an interpreter, maintain as much eye contact as you can with the hearing person.
- As professionals, it is inappropriate for interpreters to discuss or comment on aspects of their confidential assignments; please refrain from voicing personal opinions about instructor(s), course content, or class format with them.
- Inappropriate behavior toward the interpreter will not be tolerated. Students who engage in inappropriate behavior toward the interpreter may have interpreting services suspended and/or may be subject to non-academic student misconduct proceedings. If interpreting services are
suspended, the student must meet with DS staff before the reinstatement of services will be considered.

Evaluation and Supervision

- DS staff may monitor the classroom situation occasionally throughout the semester to ensure that the assignment continues to be appropriate for the students, interpreter, and instructor.

- Students may occasionally be asked to fill out an evaluation for interpreting services. Students may also provide feedback to DS staff at any time.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Responsibilities

- Pay attention to the interpretation during class. If a student chooses not to pay attention (e.g., to text message, daydream), the interpreter is not responsible for repeating the missed information/interpretation.

- If a student chooses to take their own notes, they should keep in mind that the interpreter has limited short-term memory storage and may not be able to hold all of the information that was provided while they are looking down.

- Inform the DS office in advance when not attending class or when class or an appointment has been cancelled. (See page 5, Attendance Protocol).

- Inform DS of any class or schedule changes (i.e., add, drop, room change, or course change).

- Discuss with the interpreter if there is a problem related to the interpreting services; notify DS of any such concerns. (See page 4, Facilitation of Services).

- Arrange for note-taker(s), or other classroom needs approved by DS staff, with the instructor.

- Schedule meetings with the instructor, as needed.

- Request interpreting services for activities outside of regularly scheduled class times at least 48 hours in advance. (See page 3, Services).

- Report interpreter absences and tardiness to the DS office.
**Interpreter Responsibilities**

- Attend every class and/or requested assignment.
- Wait the allotted time for students who are tardy, unless otherwise contacted.
- Interpret information that is spoken or signed in class.
- Request a substitute when unable to attend class or requested assignment(s).
- Report all student absences and no-shows to the DS office immediately for documentation purposes.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why does the DS office require 48-hour notice of an interpreter request?

Interpreter services at TAMU-CC are currently contracted either through local agencies and/or freelance certified interpreter(s); they are not staffed by/housed in the DS office. Contracted interpreters will not only need time to travel to campus, they may have other assignments or obligations at the requested time. The 48-hour period allows the DS office to confirm that an interpreter is available at the scheduled/requested time.

Can I request an interpreter or interpreting services for non-academic programs or special events (i.e., a campus-wide event)?

Yes, you can make a request for services; however, the request should be made directly to the event coordinator, who will handle any requests for special accommodations. The DS office can provide the coordinator with a referral for a local interpreting agency.

If I live on campus, to whom do I direct special housing request(s) (e.g., knock-knock lights, TTY, safety devices)?

Special housing requests should be made to Islander Housing at 361.825.HOME (4663) or housing@tamucc.edu. Campus housing, including Miramar and Momentum Village, are managed by American Campus Communities (ACC) and will comply with all applicable federal and state disability laws to ensure equal access for qualifying persons with a disability to educational programs, services, and activities.

Does TAMU-CC offer courses in American Sign Language (ASL) for foreign language credit?

No, TAMU-CC does not offer ASL courses approved for foreign language credit; however, the university may accept ASL coursework from other institutions of higher education to be transferred for foreign language credit (contact the Office of the University Registrar at 361.825.SAIL (7245) or registrar@tamucc.edu for more information).
Disability Services
116 Corpus Christi Hall
Phone: (361) 825-3438
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Email: disability.services@tamucc.edu
http://disabilityservices.tamu.edu