

# *Fast Facts* for **Faculty**

Spring 2017 v. 2

*“Deafness has left me acutely aware of both the duplicity that language is capable of and the many expressions the body cannot hide.”- Terry Galloway*



“SUPPORT” BY CHUCK BAIRD. USED WITH PERMISSION.

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## Featured Topic: The Deaf and Hard of Hearing

**A**s a campus recognized for its commitment to diversity and Inclusive Excellence, San José State affords faculty the opportunity to work with students from a wide range of cultures. Knowledge of and a continuing effort to learn about the cultures represented on our campus is essential to its success, and the diversity of the campus is a rich educational resource.

The Accessible Education Center (AEC) publishes *Fast Facts for Faculty* with the aim of providing faculty with useful information about students with disabilities, with this issue focusing on students who are Deaf or hard of hearing. It is estimated that of the over 30 million people nationwide who are either Deaf or hard of hearing, approximately 400,000 are college or university students and 70,000 are faculty members (Watson et al 2007). Deaf and hard of hearing university students face unique challenges in the classroom and may utilize a variety of learning and communication

accommodations to ensure their success at the university. In addition, the Deaf Community has its own culture in which people share common experiences, practices, values and language. This issue will explore the university’s Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH) Services Program, discuss issues of culture, communication, and education for DHOH students, and provide information about ways to best serve such students.

### *Did you know?*

The football huddle (circular style) is said to have originated in the 1890’s at Gallaudet University, a university for the Deaf and hard of hearing, in order to prevent the opposing team from reading the signed messages and intercepting the team’s plays ([gallaudet.edu](http://gallaudet.edu)).

## Deafness Defined

The varying degrees of hearing loss are categorized as *slight, mild, moderate, severe, or profound*, depending on a person's ability to hear both the frequency and volume of sound. Hearing loss can occur at any stage of life and is divided into four main types. Hearing loss that occurs as a result of outer or middle ear obstructions or diseases is called *conductive* hearing loss and is usually slight or mild. If the sensory hair cells located in the inner ear are damaged, the hearing loss is called *sensorineural* and can range from mild to profound, affecting the ability to hear certain frequencies of sound. When a combination of sensorineural and conductive hearing loss is present, the hearing loss is said to be *mixed*. Finally, a *central* hearing loss occurs if the nerves in the central nervous system are damaged, affecting the brain or "pathways to the brain" (NICHCY 2004). Medically, individuals are considered Deaf if they have hearing loss that is in the severe to profound range.

The age of onset of any particular hearing loss affects the manner in which an individual compensates for the hearing loss and learns to communicate. Deafness as it relates to age of onset is divided into three categories: *prelingual, postlingual, and late deafened*. Prelingual deafness is severe or profound hearing loss that occurs prior to age two or three, when spoken language is normally developed. Individuals with prelingual

### Did you know?

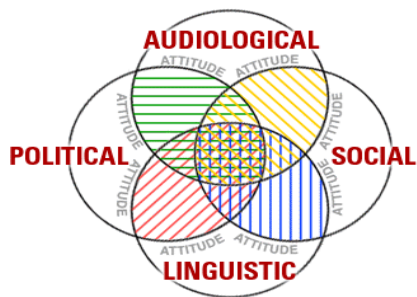
- Approximately 10% of the U.S. population has some degree of hearing loss.
- Up to 50% of deafness has genetic causes.
- Only around 10% of all Deaf people are born to a Deaf parent.

deafness rely on visual methods of communication such as sign language, as they have little or no exposure to spoken language. Postlingual deafness is the term used to describe severe or profound hearing loss that occurs after some exposure to spoken language. Individuals with postlingual deafness have some exposure to standard speech patterns and may have some experience speaking or experimenting with spoken language, thus making their own speech and use of English easier. Those who lose their hearing after the age of 16 are considered late deafened, and have had more lengthy exposure to language. These individuals may experience a longer adjustment period or may look to technology to assist with communication (pepnet.org). The degree and time of onset in combination with many other factors influence how a person communicates with others.

## Cultural Perspective

It should be noted that "there is not just one homogenous Deaf culture", and no one individual trait identifies a person as a member of Deaf culture (Mindness 2006). Generally speaking, the Deaf Community is a group in which members exhibit competence in American Sign Language (ASL), identify with other Deaf individuals, as well as accept, comply, and know the rules of interaction within the Deaf Community (Maxwell-McCaw, Zea 2011). As with any culture, identity in the Deaf Community is closely connected with language. Therefore, Deaf culture revolves around ASL- a language that relies heavily on bodily and facial expression, and that naturally developed in Deaf communities in the same way languages develop in any community. However, as Baker-Shenk and Cokely (1980) outline in the model shown, there are multiple 'avenues' to membership into the Deaf Community aside from language, and regardless of which "avenues" a person follows, his or her attitudes must be compatible with those of the community in order to be accepted as a member.

### Avenues to Membership into the Deaf Community



MODEL BY CHARLOTTE BAKER-SHENK AND DENNIS COKELY, AND PEPNET.ORG.

**Audiological:** Those individuals with a hearing loss are accepted by and identify with the community more deeply or quickly than a hearing person.

**Social:** Ability to participate in social aspects and functions within the Deaf Community, including being invited to such functions, feeling comfortable while attending, and members of the Deaf Community as friends.

**Linguistic:** Linguistic understanding of, use of, and fluency in American Sign Language.

**Political:** Ability to influence matters affecting the Deaf Community on various levels (local, state, or national), and the acceptance by the Deaf community of the decisions and proposals made via such influence.

# Disability Etiquette

- Face the Deaf person and maintain eye contact while communicating. **If an interpreter is assisting, talk to the student, not the interpreter. The interpreter's job is to “interpret”, not to converse or take part in the conversation.**
- Speak and enunciate clearly and normally, but do not exaggerate your mouth movements or raise your voice. Never assume someone with a hearing-loss can lipread. In fact, only 30% of spoken language can be understood via lipreading.
- Get a Deaf person's attention before you attempt communication. It is perfectly acceptable to tap him or her on the shoulder or wave a hand gently in the person's sight line to attract his or her attention.
- Ask about the student's preferred method of communication. You may opt to use facial expressions, body movement or writing to get your message across. Communication using paper and pencil is encouraged.
- If asked to repeat or clarify something, do so no matter how trivial you may feel the information is. Avoid saying “nevermind- it wasn't important”.
- Even a small hearing loss can hinder a person's ability to understand what is being said. Do not assume a hearing aid corrects all aspects of a hearing loss.
- Avoid the terms “hearing impaired” or “deaf and dumb” as these are considered offensive to the Deaf Community.

## Communication of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

A common misconception about communication among the Deaf and hard of hearing is that there is one universal sign language or form of communication. However, the method or methods of communication used by those with hearing loss depends on their background, environment and specific type of hearing loss and may be comprised of one or more forms of sign language, lipreading or spoken language.

Sign language itself takes many forms. In fact, knowing sign language does not guarantee that a person will be able to understand the sign language of or communicate with individuals that use sign language in other countries, even between countries that share a common spoken language like the United States (ASL) and Britain (BSL). In fact there are many forms of sign language. In addition, even within one country, there are several variations of sign language that individuals may adopt. Sign language is often thought to be a substitute for, or a manual version of English. This type of signing, Signing Exact English (S.E.E.), is one form of sign language that was in fact developed by Gerilee Gustason, faculty emeritus and former director of the Deaf Education Credential Program at SJSU, and follows the exact syntax and grammar of spoken English. However, American Sign Language is known as the language of the Deaf, and is an independent language with its own grammar and structure; “a full-fledged language with grammar and puns and poems...a language equally suitable for making love or speeches, for flirtation or mathematics” (Sacks

1991). Furthermore, individuals may choose to communicate using sign language in which the words are mouthed or spoken at the same time, or a type of Pidgin signing that combines the word order of English with the conceptual signs of ASL.

### *Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs)*

Some Deaf or hard of hearing students utilize an Assistive Listening Device (ALD) as an accommodation to ensure effective communication. Using the ALD allows students to hear the lecture more clearly while blocking any environmental sounds that may cause interference. This accommodation requires the speaker to use a microphone to transmit spoken words to the listener's receiver. If a student is using an ALD, he or she will give the speaker the transmitter at the beginning of every class. Because placement of the ALD is critical for ensuring proper transmission, it should be attached as close to the speaker's mouth as possible (e.g.: to the collar or lapel). For confidentiality purposes, the transmitter should be turned off in order to have a private conversation or when the speaker leaves the room for any reason.

# Educational Sign Language Interpreters

Sign language interpreters aim to facilitate communication in the classroom between a Deaf or hard of hearing individual and hearing individuals. To interpret successfully, interpreters must possess a high level of linguistic, cognitive, and technical skill while strictly adhering to a code of professional conduct set forth by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) through which most interpreters are certified members.

The code of ethics pertaining to the delivery of effective and exact communication that interpreters are bound by includes issues of professionalism, conduct, professional development, and confidentiality. Interpreters are required to adhere to standards of confidential communication and may only share information with a third party on an as-needed basis. In addition to adherence to this code, there are several certifications that can be awarded to interpreters

who successfully pass language, interpretation, communication, judgment, ethics, culture, and professionalism assessments.

Interpreters certified through RID are required to attain a certain number of continuing education credits every four years in order to maintain their credentials. In order to effectively convey what is being communicated in the classroom, the interpreter must be able to interpret all the information in an unbiased way, and maintain the tone, cultural background, and meaning of what is being said. The ability to interpret fluently at a normal speed

can take years for interpreters to master. Because of the physical demands of interpreting, two interpreters are assigned to team interpret in a classroom. Team interpreters are needed for longer classes or when an interpreter works for several consecutive classes.



“WATER LILY” BY CHUCK BAIRD. USED WITH PERMISSION

# Educational Real-Time Captioners

In order to facilitate communication between the instructor, the Deaf student, and other students, some DHOH students use the services of an educational real-time captioning service provider or captioner in their classrooms. Educational real-time captioners and sign language interpreters serve students with different needs. Students who are late deafened or postlingually Deaf who do not use ASL would require the services of a captioner. To assist in providing quality captioning services, it is helpful if faculty provide materials such as syllabi, schedules, lists of technical terms etc. to captioners prior to the lecture. This is especially important for lectures heavy with highly specialized vocabulary, proper names, or technical terminology (DCMP 2008).

Educational real-time captioners use specialized realtime software, a steno machine and a laptop to record spoken English verbatim into readable transcripts for the student. Because captioners are not working with pre-recorded or offline material, they must work quickly to capture all that is being said in the classroom and are often able to type upwards of 225 words per minute with a high rate of accuracy (DCMP 2008). Trained in shorthand on a stenographic keyboard, the captioner records anything spoken in the classroom by both the instructor and other students. This speech is simultaneously translated and converted into printed format by the computer program. The student can then immediately read the captions on a laptop, TV, projector, or similar device and can receive copies of the transcripts after class (ASL Network

2011). The Deaf or hard of hearing student and the lecturers have the right to receive a copy of the transcripts if requested.

## *A Word about Captioned Media*

For Deaf or hard of hearing students to receive equal access to and fully participate in curriculum requirements, any electronic media used in the classroom or online must be captioned. Further, there are limitations to the services an interpreter or captioner can provide with regard to translating electronic media in the classroom. Because electronic media is scripted and spoken at a greater rate of speed than normal speech, service providers are unable to capture enough information to convey the full message of the electronic media. Moreover, it is difficult for students to watch both the interpreter or captioner as well as the video screen. In following with the California State University system-wide Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI), the University has contracted with Automatic Sync Technologies to provide captioned media. For assistance and information on captioning, contact Chris Laxton, Director of Academic Technology at 408-924-2856 .

# Guidelines for Working with Interpreters and Captioners

Both educational sign language interpreters and educational real-time captioners are professional employees of SJSU. These service providers are assigned to classes as required and are determined by students' medical documentation provided. Service providers must remain in the classroom for all aspects of the curriculum: lectures, group work, activities both in and outside the classroom, and tests. Service providers are necessary during tests to ensure the facilitation of communication should a question be posed or an emergency arise. Because interpreter and captioner logistics in the classroom depend on subject matter, furniture must be placed to ensure a clear line of vision for the students to view the speaker, laptop, board, and interpreter simultaneously. This furniture must remain in the classroom for the entire semester and should be reserved for use by the service provider. The "Very Important Guidelines" for faculty working with students who use these services are as follows:



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1. Eligibility for interpreter and captioner services are determined by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program coordinator, and is based in part on the professional documentation provided by the student.
2. A captioner or interpreter's main function is to facilitate communication between the instructor, Deaf student and other students. When interacting with Deaf or hard of hearing students, speak directly to the student and not to the captioner or interpreter. Captioners and interpreters cannot participate in classroom activities.
3. Materials such as syllabi, schedules, lists of technical terms etc., should be distributed to interpreters and captioners to ensure quality interpreting and captioning services.
4. Interpreters and captioners adhere to a strict code of ethics pertaining to the delivery of effective and exact communication; the code of ethics is incorporated in the AEC required procedures. Service providers are bound by these required procedures, which include confidentiality issues.
5. Required materials such as films or videos should be captioned. To view the captions contact Video Services at 924-2867 or visit their web site at [www.sjsu.edu/depts/VideoServices/](http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/VideoServices/). Captions are more beneficial to Deaf and hard of hearing students when viewing electronic media.
6. Interpreters and captioners are required for all academic related course work and activities; this includes field trips, meetings etc. The student is responsible for requesting an interpreter or captioner every time the service is required.
7. Real-time captioners are trained in machine steno, which is connected to a laptop where the lecture is displayed in text. The Deaf or hard of hearing student, and the lecturers have the right to receive a copy of the transcripts if requested.
8. At the end of the semester, interpreter evaluations are distributed to faculty. Feedback is welcomed and encouraged and is used to improve services for both faculty and students. If you have any questions, contact Maria Smyrniotis, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Coordinator, at 924-6005.
9. Complete guidelines and additional information can be found on the AEC website at [www.sjsu.edu/aec](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec).

## In the Classroom

In addition to prescribed classroom accommodations, there are several things that faculty can do to maximize the learning environment for students. The following information will assist you in providing effective communication in a classroom situation when working with a Deaf or hard of hearing student.

- Check the environment; your voice may be very soft in a noisy room. If so, move to a quieter location.
- Keep your hands away from your face and mouth while speaking. Avoid talking toward the board.
- Use captioned media.
- Repeat questions that are asked from the back of the room.
- Avoid standing in front of a window or other light source as your face will be difficult to see.
- Make sure you have the visual attention of the student before speaking to the student. Maintain visual contact with the student as much as possible.
- Meet individually with the student to clarify your course expectations and grading policy. Provide the student with handouts when using overheads or when other students give presentations.

## Legal Corner

There are several laws in place aimed at ensuring that the Deaf and hard of hearing Community has equal access to media such as television, telephone, and other video programming. Likewise, there are regulations that pertain specifically to post-secondary institutions, outlining their responsibilities to students who are Deaf or hard of hearing. What follows is an overview of these regulations.

In 1990, the Telecommunications Act required “telecommunications products and services to be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities if readily achievable without much difficulty or expense.” This Act requires that products are manufactured in a way that they are able to be used with adaptive equipment, such as “peripheral devices and specialized customer premises equipment that are commonly used by people with disabilities, where readily achievable.”

More specifically, the The Hearing Aid Compatibility Act of 1988 (the HAC Act) requires that telephones used in the United States must be hearing aid compatible, meaning that they must work with hearing aids to “pick up and amplify sounds from the telephone’s receiver...[and] also minimize electromagnetic interference, which has the effect of creating additional noise that makes it difficult to understand speech” (Section 710).

With regard to closed captioning and video accessibility, section 713 of the Telecommunicatinos Act required “closed captioning on television programs (video programming) and issued rules requiring video programming distributors to provide closed captioning on 100 percent of new, non-exempt English video programming.”

The laws for post-secondary colleges and universities (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA) state that institutions are required to “provide necessary auxiliary aids and services for individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing, including qualified interpreters, transcribers, notetakers, and provision of closed captioning or other access for televised information.” This requirement is not limited to in-class activities and covers “extracurricular activities, off-site internships, and activities open to the public, or to part-time, non-credit, or non-matriculated students, and to employees.” Furthermore, according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), colleges and universities may be required to make modifications to ensure that a Deaf or hard of hearing student is able to participate equally and effectively in programs at the college or university.



In Fall 2010, President Obama signed into law The 21st Century Communications Act, which updates the original Communications Act, to address new technology. Among the many changes, the 21st Century Act ensures that the Deaf and hard of hearing are able to access phones with advanced technologies, including cell phones or devices used for Internet-based communications, and can access other Internet-based communications technologies (equipment, services and networks).

# DHOH Program at SJSU

In conjunction with the Accessible Education Center's mission to provide high-quality retention services to students with disabilities, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Program's goal is to facilitate communication any time such an accommodation is curriculum related. The DHOH program provides professional Educational Sign-Language Interpreting and Educational Real-Time Captioning services. Notetaking services and Assistive Listening Device (ALD) Loaner Programs are also available. Matriculated students are assisted with priority registration so service accommodations

can be arranged and students begin the first day of classes with effective communication. The DHOH team at SJSU is comprised of an expert team of three staff interpreters, all of whom have been certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). In addition to the main staff interpreters, SJSU currently employs 28 hourly interpreters and captioners to service the Deaf and hard of hearing Community on campus both in the classroom and during other campus events such as orientations, campus tours, guest lectures, and fieldwork.

## Meet the Staff



### **Maria Smyrinotis, CI/CT - Program Coordinator, DHOH Services**

Maria is the Program Coordinator for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services in the Accessible Education Center. Maria has been an interpreter at San José State for 25 years and has been working in the field for 36 years. Maria completed the Interpreter Training Program and received her ITP at San José State University through the College of Education, Department of Special Education. Maria is nationally certified through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and holds both a Certificate of Interpretation (CI) and a Certificate of Transliteration (CT). Maria became interested in the field of interpreting when their first child was born Deaf. Maria has enjoyed working in postsecondary education for the greater part of her tenure.



### **Candice Kingrey, Staff Interpreter**

Candice has been working professionally in the American Sign Language interpreting field since 1990. Candice has an AAS in Interpreting for the Deaf from Portland Community College in Portland, Oregon, is nationally certified through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), and holds the Certificate of Interpretation (CI) and the National Interpreting Certification: Master level (NIC:M). Candice's professional career has included interpreting in educational, medical, psychiatric and legal settings, owning a large freelance interpreter agency in Oregon. Candice's first love has always been post-secondary interpreting where she enjoys both the challenges and the diversity of interpreting in a vibrant University learning environment.



### **Marilynn Fillpin-Howard, Staff Captioner**

Marilynn is the Staff Captioner for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Program in the Accessible Education Center. Marilynn attended and completed Court Reporting training at Golden State School of Court Reporting and Captioning in Dublin, California. Before joining San José State, Marilynn captioned at Chabot Community College in Hayward, California. Marilynn started her career at San Jose State in 2008 as a freelance Captioner. In 2015, Marilynn was hired as AEC's first Staff Captioner.

### *Did you know?*

Providing interpreting or captioning services for 33 students requires approximately 13,787 hours of service per semester.

# Contact Us

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Administration Building 110  
Phone: 408-924-6000  
Fax: 408-924-5999  
[www.sjsu.edu/aec](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec)  
[aec-info@sjsu.edu](mailto:aec-info@sjsu.edu)

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Program  
Industrial Studies Building 222  
Phone: 408-924-6542  
[aec-dhoh@sjsu.edu](mailto:aec-dhoh@sjsu.edu)

## Resources

- Read about issues relating to people who are Deaf or hard of hearing at The National Association of the Deaf's website at [www.nad.org](http://www.nad.org).
- Find a wealth of information and resources to enhance educational opportunities for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing at [www.pepnet.org](http://www.pepnet.org).
- Learn more about interpreting as a profession and The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf at [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org).
- See more art by Chuck Baird, painter of the Deaf and ASL experience, at [www.chuckbairdart.com](http://www.chuckbairdart.com).

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