

Accommodating Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in the Laboratory

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1

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2

Regarding Hearing Related Disabilities



- Wide range of auditory perception.
- Individual can be born with disability or acquire through illness, injury, or condition.
- Each individual will incorporate disability differently; adapt own communication strategy.

3

Disability, Culture, and Context



- "There are variations in how a person becomes deaf or hard of hearing, level of hearing, age of onset, educational background, communication methods, and cultural identity."
- National Association of the Deaf, Community and Culture, Frequently Asked Questions.
- <https://www.nad.org/resources/american-sign-language/community-and-culture-frequently-asked-questions/>

4

In the Classroom



- Understanding different experiences of disability facilitates approaching the situation respectfully.
- Conveying different types of information call for appropriate methods.
- Work with student/office for student with disabilities to find the right strategies.

5

Communication Accommodation Examples: Faculty and Student



- If student has trouble understanding Professor's speech, provide printed instructions/materials before class.
- Consider Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) for lectures.
- If student lipreads, the Professor can position self so student can easily view.
- Provide preferential seating near front.
- Student may use an Assistive listening system.

6

Sign Language Interpreter as Accommodation: Tips



- Sign language interpreter must be qualified: must know technical language and terms.
- May help to meet with student and professor before class.
- Interpreter should discuss sharing space with the professor.
- Preview of the day's materials may facilitate interpretation.
- Professor should pause during any demonstration to allow student to see interpreter as well as the experiment.



7

Peer to Peer Communication: Small Group and One-on-One



- Body positioning important for expressive communication.
- Adhering to turn taking makes the speaker easier to recognize and improves communication for all.
- Sharing of transcript/notes following discussion/class.
- One-on-one, texting, email, writing, or sharing a computer may facilitate communication.

8

Considerations in the Laboratory



- Provide visual warning signals along with auditory alerts.
- Post safety information conspicuously.
- If an interpreter is present, familiarize him/her with procedures.
- Reduce visual clutter: design work stations to permit unobstructed view.
- Consider transparent fume hoods.

9

Questions?



10

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11

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12