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

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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.

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/
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.

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.
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.

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.
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.

Questions?
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