

DEAFNESS OR HARD OF HEARING FACT SHEET

Definition: Deafness is defined by the inability to understand conversational speech, with or without the use of a hearing aid. A student who is hard of hearing (HoH) may have difficulty understanding speech, with or without hearing aids. Some students may be able to lip read, others rely on American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters to communicate with others. Each student's hearing ability will vary, based on whether the deafness/HoH occurred at birth or was acquired. Let them be the guide on how best to communicate.

Possible accommodations assigned by the DRC; you will receive a service letter from the DRC delineating the appropriate accommodations for a particular student.

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| Sign Language Interpreters | Preferential Seating – front row |
| Assistive Listening Devices – FM Stereo | Note Taker |
| Captioning of Visual Media/Lectures | |

Faculty Suggestions:

When addressing a student that is deaf/hard of hearing, speak directly to that student, not to the interpreter.

Provide advanced copies of handouts, notes, or PowerPoint slides in class or online.

Ensure audio/visual materials that will be used during class time (films, videos, and slide shows) are captioned; if not, contact the DRC as soon as possible, ideally before the beginning of the semester.

Attempt to discuss questions you have regarding the interpreter's role in the classroom with the student and interpreter prior to the first day of class and provide copies of the course syllabus to the student and interpreter.

Enable a clear line-of-vision for students that are deaf and hard-of-hearing and the interpreter with respect to the board, TV or overhead screens.

Take a break between topics and changes in subject material to allow for the interpreter to process the message.

Don't turn your back to the students when speaking; students that are HoH may depend on lip reading to communicate.

Allow visuals to remain posted until the interpreter(s) have had time to view and present them in the interpreted message.

If a student asks a question or has a comment or concern, remember to allow a slight pause before responding to allow for the interpreter's processing time (lag).

During group discussions encourage and remind students not to talk over each other, and to allow a slight pause before the next speaker begins to allow for the interpreter to process the message.

When students give presentations, remind them to speak clearly so students that are HoH are able to listen and participate.

Label any equations on the board and refer to them by those labels. Refrain from examples such as "this one goes here, and that one goes there."

For more information about deafness or HoH, visit the "From Where I Sit" video series:

<http://www.calstate.edu/accessibility/resources/gregoire.shtml>

<http://www.calstate.edu/accessibility/resources/kellie.shtml>