

Interpreter Services SSR Report

1. Primary Services:

The purpose of Interpreter Services is to provide reasonable accommodations, specifically sign language interpreting and speech to text services, i.e. CART, for ACC students, faculty, staff, and visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing (stakeholders).

The impact and outcome of our services is to bridge the communication gap between deaf and hearing people, thus allowing stakeholders access to ACC programs, classes and activities.

2. SWOT

Strengths:

Good rapport with the people we serve

Caring attitude shown by assigning interpreters that meet the students language needs

Mentorship Program

Teamwork amongst staff and hourly employees

Interpreters flexible work schedule- willing to take on last minute assignments

Quality of interpreters- highly skilled

Great boss/office support

How the strengths affect the provision of services: These strengths result in quality interpreter services. Without quality interpreters and assigning the correct interpreters to classes our stakeholders would not be served. They would not have access to the educational services and programs they need.

Weaknesses:

Interpreters not getting access to Blackboard by teachers who class they interpret

New scheduling database- has been years in the process of developing and revising

Limited office space

Interpreters needed for deaf and hard of hearing staff

Interpreters needed in tutoring lab

Needing interpreters available for last minute requests

No student orientation re: the use of interpreters, interpreter service policies and procedures

No supervisor site/classroom visits

Need for more benefits for hourly interpreters

Interpreter Services Dept should have closer ties to OSD i.e. monthly meeting should be with OSD and not Support Center

Interpreters--Lack of professional behavior; not following ACC policies and procedures and/or Code of Professional Conduct

How the weaknesses affect the provision of services. Some of the weaknesses do not have a direct impact on the provision of services but limit our administrative coordination, i.e. office space

Others, such as closer ties with OSD, can affect the coordination of accommodations, i.e. - students do not receive services or services are delayed.

Opportunities:

Having the new database fully functional—look at expanding its capabilities

Have an IS office or some dedicated space at each campus

Having a closer relationship with OSD—have social functions together

Have staff and hourly interpreters meet informally more often—i.e. brown bag lunches

Staff parking for hourly interpreters

Need for deaf student forum to voice their concerns

Having interpreters on call for last minute assignments

Closer relationship with IPP

More opportunities for deaf students and interpreters to socialize

Regularly scheduled workshops for interpreters

Training for teachers on how to work with interpreters and students

How the opportunities affect the provision of services. A fully functioning database is essential for effective scheduling. Training & workshops for interpreters would expand and enhance the communication services already being provided to our stakeholders

Threats:

IT- not available or can't provide the services and equipment when needed i.e. updated computers, software and delay in getting new database up and running

Staff shortage

Budget- lack of funding to support IS

Lack of classroom space—enrollment increases exceeds available space

Lack of parking for hourly interpreters—harder for interpreters to be on time for classes; some may be unwilling to work for us or work at certain campuses i.e. RGC

Interpreter professionalism-

- Need to communicate; discuss problems as they arise
- Lack of professionalism by a few interpreters can cause the people we serve to stereotype interpreters
- Lack of supervisory classroom visits

How the threats affect the provision of services. Lack of staff and proper equipment can disrupt and/or prevent meeting the communication and accessibility needs of our stakeholders.

3. Projected Improvements and outcomes

Contacting instructors via email re: Interpreters needing access to Blackboard thus giving more interpreters access to Blackboard to help them prepare for their classes.

- **Improvement step:** at this time no notices are sent out to instructors re: interpreters needing access to Blackboard. IS will send out notices to all instructors who have interpreters scheduled in their sections.

Will start using the scheduling database this summer and provide feedback to IT re: its use and needed revisions. The goal is to make scheduling more efficient and less labor intensive.

- **Improvement step:** complete the needed revisions by Aug 31, 2011. Start Phase II by Sept 1, 2011

Expand the Staff Interpreter office; eliminate overcrowding and in addition place 2 additional computer stations in the Staff Interpreter office. Explore finding space at other campuses for staff and hourly interpreters. Provide interpreters space to prepare for classes; meet to discuss their work, exchange ideas.

- **Improvement step:** this is put on hold until the college provides the funds

Look at how to schedule interpreters so they can be available for the tutoring lab and last minute requests

- **Improvement step:** at this time no formal notification is given to deaf students regarding the availability of deaf/signing tutors in the lab at RVS. An email will be sent to students informing them of the deaf/signing tutors schedule each semester.

Before any action is taken re: last minute requests, a baseline count will be taken to determine when and from which area or department the requests come.

Need a student orientation re: interpreter policies and procedures. The goal is to make students aware of their rights and responsibilities when using services and give them the tools they need to access services

- **Improvement step:** at this time approximately 10% of the deaf students attend the OSD Info Sessions. Emails will be sent out to all new students to encourage them to attend these sessions. The goal is to get at least 20% to attend

IS Supervisor visits the classroom to observe interpreters to provide feedback and to create relationships with instructors.

- **Improvement step:** The IS Supervisor will visit 10 sections each semester

Having a closer working relationship with OSD would improve the coordination of services

- **Improvement step:** The IS Supervisor will meet with the staff interpreters to identify specifics re: the coordination of services. Once identified corrective steps can be taken.

Educating hourly interpreters via workshops, meetings, etc. re: professional behavior to give them the skills needed to expand and enhance their skills

- **Improvement step:** identify with the staff specific behaviors that need to be addressed and then determine the best way to provide the needed training i.e. workshop, online training, etc.

4. Measuring Improvements and Outcomes

- POS Survey of students and faculty

- Survey interpreters
- Measure the interpreter requests made v. requests filled
- Focus groups

5. How will the planned improvements align with and contribute to the Mission and Intended Outcomes of ACC?

All the planned improvements directly or indirectly relate to providing better services for and work more closely with all of our stakeholders (students, staff/faculty, and interpreters). The Interpreter Services Department provides communication services which allow deaf students, faculty and staff access to higher education and workforce training. In addition the improvements will show we are responsive to the internal needs of many of our stakeholders.