

The University of Texas at El Paso

Captioning Policy and Procedure - June 11, 2018

UTEP relies on administrators, faculty and staff to provide equal access to all programs and activities for individuals with disabilities. The University is committed to adhering to the requirements of Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, by providing reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. Individuals who are deaf or have hearing loss (hearing impaired) may require accommodations or modifications to course materials or other University communications.

The most effective means of providing equal access to videos, movie clips, DVDs, and films is through the use of products with open or closed-captioning or subtitles, whether they are shown in class, assigned outside of class, or utilized for other University purposes. In accordance with federal law, it is the responsibility of all colleges, departments, administrators, faculty and staff to utilize only media products with open or closed-captioning or subtitles, or provide an alternate format such as a script. When a video is shown in class, employees should ensure that captions are turned on, since doing so benefits all students.

Procedure

New Video/DVD/Film Releases

It is the responsibility of the college, department, administrators, faculty and staff to:

1. Purchase and use captioned videos/DVDs/films for teaching or related purposes in the classroom, college, department, or University-sponsored event;
2. Substitute videos/DVDs/films, which have captioning in the place of older versions without captioning;
3. Update all videos/DVDs/films to include only those with captioning; and
4. Create captions for any University-created video.

Non-captioned Video/DVD/Film Releases

It is the responsibility of the college, department, administrators, faculty and staff to:

1. Transition their media materials into captioned and accessible products for all;
2. Inquire in the Media & Microforms area of the Library to determine if the University has a captioned version;
3. Seek an alternative to a non-captioned video/DVD/film to one with closed-captioning;

4. Make a determination on whether a non-captioned video/DVD/film is essential to the course or if it may be deleted from a syllabus; or
5. Offer an alternative assignment to a hearing-impaired student in place of viewing a non-captioned video/DVD/film.

Live events, including those that are “streamed” or simultaneously broadcast via the web

The intent of captioning live events is to enable hearing impaired viewers to watch *real-time* presentations such as concerts, plays, seminars and ceremonies, such as Commencement. When video screens are used as part of the event, captions visually provide these viewers with the portion of the content that is available to others via the audio track. Captions not only include dialogue but also identify the speaker, notable sound effects, and other significant audio.

1. Per UTEP policy, it is the responsibility of the department that hosts the event to ensure that captioning is provided whether the event is broadcast live or recorded. (See the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures, *Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities Policy*, Requests for Accommodations, Sec. 2.4.2, Beneficiaries of Programs, Services and Activities, <https://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=30553>).
2. The financial cost of the digital video recording and captioning should be built in as a budget line item and included along with any other event expenditure items.
3. The captioning process requires a high level of professional expertise. Therefore, this service may be arranged through an outside vendor if University staff is unavailable.

Alternative Accommodations for Non-captioned Videos/DVDs/Films in Academic Courses

In the event the college/department, administrators, faculty or staff determine a non-captioned media product is essential to academic course requirements, it is the responsibility of the college/department, administrator, faculty or staff member to meet with the hearing-impaired student to determine reasonable alternatives. Potential alternatives may include but are not limited to the following:

1. The student’s American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for that particular class will interpret the video/DVD/film. The ASL interpreter will review the media transcript, if available, and/or preview the video. ASL Interpreters must be informed one week in advance of the assignment.
2. If a captioned video/DVD/film is not available for the hearing impaired student, the ASL interpreter may be given a copy of the script at least one class meeting prior to the showing. If no ASL interpreter is assigned to the class because the hearing-impaired student does not understand ASL, such a student may depend on speech/lip reading and/or the use of an Assistive Listening Device (ALD). In such a situation, when captioning is not available, a transcript of the video should be made available to the student at least one class meeting prior to the showing. It is the responsibility of the instructor to contact the publisher to obtain a copy of the transcript.

3. The instructor may offer an alternative assignment to the hearing impaired student in place of viewing a non-captioned video/DVD/film. Alternative assignments should be determined on an individual basis between the instructor and the student. Possible alternatives may include:

- i. Providing in-depth copies of the instructor's notes on the video/DVD/film to ensure the student is given full access to the main points of the media presentation.
- ii. Allowing the student to view the video/DVD/film additionally, on their own personal time, with a copy of the instructor's notes.

The Role of the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS)

It is the responsibility of CASS to determine reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services based upon documentation presented by students. Faculty, staff, and other beneficiaries with disabilities who need ADA accommodations are encouraged to contact the department hosting the event, at least one week prior.

CASS provides the following services for hearing impaired students:

- Qualified ASL interpreter(s);
- Assistance in locating a peer note-taker;
- Provision of an Assistive Listening Device (ALD). (The instructor wears the microphone - transmitter and the student wears the receiver).

Additionally, CASS will inform professors and instructors when a hearing-impaired student using an ASL Interpreter will be present in their classroom. Notification generally will be provided within three (3) workdays of CASS receiving a student's finalized course schedule. Timely notification is dependent upon the voluntary disclosure by the student. CASS will also provide the University community with general informational materials regarding:

- Captioned videos and accessible media;
- Preferential seating
- Working with a hearing impaired individual & interpreter;
- Interpreter responsibilities;
- Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 & 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

For assistance, please contact CASS at (915) 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu.

Definitions:

Closed captioning: a process where specifically encoded text is placed onto video or other media for the benefit of the hearing impaired. Normally invisible, closed captioning requires an internal decoder to be activated for viewing on the monitor or television. Closed captioning should always be turned on.

Compliance: All captioning must be in compliance with the United States Access Board and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, <https://www.access-board.gov/the-board/policies/accessibility-statement>

Open captioning: a process by which text is added to video or other media that is a written translation of the media's dialogue. Unlike closed captioning, open captions require no special decoding equipment for viewing on televisions or monitors and are always displayed and cannot be turned off.

