UTEP Captioning Policy and Procedure

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 & 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, by providing reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. Individuals who are deaf or have a hearing loss may require accommodations and/or modifications to course materials and/or other University communications.

The most effective means of providing equal access to videos, movie clips, DVDs, and films (whether shown in class or assigned outside of class, shown at a University event, or used to promote the University) is through the use of products with open or closed-captioning or subtitles. 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, and/or provide an alternate format, such as a script. When a video is shown in class, ensure that captions are turned on. Doing so helps 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 purposes in their assigned classroom and/or college/department or University-sponsored event;

2. Substitute a video/DVD/film with captioning in the place of an older version without captioning;

3. Update all video/DVD/film stock 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 video/DVD/film with closed-captioning;

4. Make a determination if the video/DVD/film is essential to a course or if it may be deleted from a syllabus; or

5. Offer an alternative assignment to a student in place of viewing a non-captioned video/DVD/film.
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 student who is hard-of-hearing/deaf to determine reasonable alternatives. A list of possible alternatives (not all inclusive) follows:

1. The individual’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, then the student who is hard-of-hearing/deaf and 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 student who is hearing impaired does not understand American Sign Language (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 student in place of viewing a non-captioned video/DVD/film. Alternative assignments should be determined on an individual basis between the professor and the student who is hard-of-hearing/deaf. Possible alternatives could include:

4. 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.

5. Allowing the student who is hard of hearing to view the video/DVD/film additional times 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 the individual. CASS provides the following services for eligible hard-of-hearing/deaf individuals:

• Qualified American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter(s); and/or

• Assistance in locating a peer note-taker.

• Provision of an Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) (the professor wears the microphone/transmitter & the student wears the receiver).
Additionally CASS will inform professors and instructors when a hard-of-hearing/deaf student using an Interpreter will be present in their classroom. Notification generally will be provided within three work days of CASS receiving a finalized 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 hard-of-hearing/deaf individual & interpreter;
- Interpreter responsibilities;
- Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 & 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

For assistance, please contact CASS at (915) 747-5148.

Definitions:

**Open captioning** is 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.

**Closed captioning** is 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/television.